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*The Strawberry
Handkerchief*

*Amelia E.
Barr*

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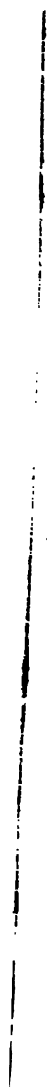


Downed. Camp.

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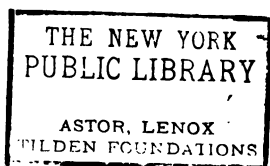


THE STRAWBERRY HANDKERCHIEF

OTHER BOOKS BY MRS. BARR

JAN VEDDER'S WIFE
THE BOW OF ORANGE RIBBON
REMEMBER THE ALAMO
FRIEND OLIVIA

A ROSE OF A HUNDRED LEAVES
THE LION'S WHELP
THE BLACK SHILLING
THE BELLE OF BOWLING GREEN
CECILIA'S LOVERS
THE HEART OF JESSY LAURIE
ETC.





The Strawberry Handkerchief

A ROMANCE OF THE STAMP ACT

By AMELIA E. BARR

Author of "The Belle of Bowling Green," "Cecilia's
Lovers," "The Heart of Jessy Laurie," Etc.

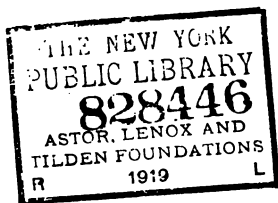


WITH FRONTISPIECE
By HARRISON FISHER

A. L. BURT COMPANY

Publishers

New York



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IN REMEMBRANCE
OF
THOSE GREAT NEW YORK MERCHANTS
WHOSE STUBBORN DEFIANCE
OF
THE STAMP ACT
A. D. 1765
"MADE ROOM FOR LIBERTY!"

Mrs Mary P. H. Emerson - 10 Oct. 1918



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CHAPTER ONE

THE HOUSEHOLD OF VAN VROOM

ONE hundred and fifty years ago there was not in New York a more picturesque dwelling than that of Captain Jansen Van Vroom. For, speaking broadly, the Dutch house is as full of character as the Dutch man; it is, in fact, the outward and visible sign of a mentality, quite unique and distinctive. No Englishman, no American, no Frenchman, or Italian, ever builds his residence after the order of Holland. It would not represent him, it would never be the home of his feelings and his imagination.

But Captain Jansen's house was a solid reflection of the domestic side of his character; he had been building it in his heart and mind twenty years, before he realized it in its material beauty. As he stood by the wheel of his ship, or walked her deck, he was always planning the light, spacious rooms, the lockers and closets, the low, wide stairways, the walls wainscoted with native woods or panels of Dutch tiles. Its gilded weathercock, its red-tiled roof, the picturesque plenty of its gables—with their ends notched like steps towards the street—the blending of bricks of various colors, glazed and laid in checkers on the wall, the window caps of bricks set edgewise—the immense square chimneys—the kindly looking doorway opening in half, and above it cut in large white stone the motto he had himself composed:

"My Captain has brought me into a good Haven."

These things were slowly, but very clearly, evolved from his mentality, and so plainly set in order before the building began, that any deviation would doubtless have plunged him into a distracted perplexity.

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He had chosen for its location a tract of land lying on the North River, and running eastward to Broadway. The house stood nearly in the center of this tract, and was surrounded by a garden that was for eight or nine months of the year a little drama of color and scent and beauty. Not even Joris Van Heemskirk had such a garden. Some people, who did not like Van Vroom, affected to think Van Heemskirk's house the finer of the two; but there was no possible dispute as to the gardens. Van Vroom's was a little bit of Holland transferred to New York. Everyone paused to look at its high box hedges, and quaintly cut trees, its graveled walks, its glory of every flowering bulb, its pretty pleasure house and boat house, its "mottoes and verses for a good heart," and its beds of all kinds of herbs for food, and for perfume, and for healing. But however it came to pass, that a sailor man could be such a wonderful gardener, was one of those problems of the Dutch character that no one has yet solved. Jan had spent nearly his whole life at sea, and yet he was always able to send his neighbor Van Heemskirk a dish of peas or berries a full week before Van Heemskirk's were ready to eat; or perhaps a basket of flowering bulbs while yet Van Heemskirk's were unfolded.

"With my good regards I offer them," were the complimentary words that ever accompanied such gifts, and in that hour of giving he felt friendly to his rival, all comparison being for the time suppressed in his own manifest superiority.

He was sitting smoking one afternoon on the long stoop which faced the river, and watching the birds build in the vines that covered its lattice work. They twittered to him, they hopped from their nests to his shoulder, they rested on his hand or his pipe-stem, and when he answered them in a low whistle, they seemed to understand. Many big, fierce men had sailed with Captain Jan, and stood in constant

fear of him, but the little birds knew that he loved them, and that they were quite welcome to the shelter of his porch. His large, stolid, sun-browned face, with its black beard, and black brows, and pale blue eyes beneath them, held only kindness for them; and though he was great-handed, and thick-legged, and all his fashion out of measure big, they made him their *familiar*, and chatted to him about their mates and their housekeeping in the most candid manner imaginable. At least he said so, and it was not well to contradict Captain Jan about anything that took place in his house or his garden.

He looked to be quite at rest, and yet his heart was musing over many things, and not altogether satisfied. That morning he had sent Van Heemskirk a basket of daffodils and fresh garden cress, with the usual message of good will, and Van Heemskirk had not been content to return his customary verbal acknowledgment; he had written a letter, praising Jan's flowers and salad, and regretting a little his own more tardy varieties. Then he had suddenly turned the subject to the closing of the French war, and the glory of the great peace consummated.

"And so on," mused Jan bitterly; "what he will say next, I know. Read it, I will not," and he pushed the letter into the lattice work, and shifted his chair a little further away from the offending words.

Now it was not the way of Jan's face to reveal what was passing in Jan's heart, but there was one woman whom neither sign nor the want of sign could deceive. Jan's mind was an open book to his wife, Katrina. She came to the house door and glanced at her husband, then placing a chair beside him, she sat down. She did not speak, nor even smile; her knitting was in her hands, and she went calmly on with it. Jan was equally unresponsive. He kept his pipe in his mouth, his face was without expression, his

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eyes fixed upon a linden tree at the river side. There was an apparent vacuum between them. Jan made the first move: he looked at Katrina with a swift side-long glance—for her more vital nature was drawing him like a magnet—then he stirred slightly, sighed, and let his eyes meet the loving eyes waiting for the moment, as he softly murmured one word:

“Katrina.”

“My Jan! What troubles thee?”

“No trouble have I.”

“Van Heemskirk sent thee a letter.”

“Well, then, it was about the flowers and the cress.”

“And what else?”

Then Jan laughed. “A little witch art thou, Katrina. It was about the peace. Glad of it, is he; and well he knows I am not glad. So, then, his letter was unkind.”

“Yes, but thou art glad, Jan. Very glad indeed, art thou. Say that to everyone. It is also the truth. Think once, of the French and Indians butchering their way down to New York. Come! come! The victory was a great victory—the peace is a good peace—and that thou must say.”

“It is no good for Jan Van Vroom, and most of our men of standing will say the same thing. No more privateering. Privateering has gone to the *tuyvel*, Katrina; and what will my ships do now, I wonder? Much money I shall lose. Van Heemskirk knew this well; then I take it unfriendly in him to remind me of the peace.”

“Van Heemskirk judges thee by himself. So he measures thee of full stature. He is a good neighbor, Jan.”

“Not so, Katrina. Good neighbors I have none; but I give myself no *komber* because of that. Whose fence touches mine? You know it is the fence of that proud Scot, Alexander Semple. I take leave to say, he is anigh intolerable. He talks of the King as if he had more right to talk of the King than I have. If his Majesty is named in the way

of conversation, he lifts his beaver; and if to the Presence he could come, it is on his knees he would be, no doubt of that. He is a Scot, and I was christened in the first Garden Street Kirke; yet this Scot is an elder in the Kirke, Katrina, and I am not an elder—no, nor even a deacon. I sit in my own pew that my grandfather bought when the Kirke was built. I make all my subscriptions, every Sunday I give twice—once to the poor, and once to the Kirke—also I think of my dues and my charities. I am for the government—if the government will make us some wars, and let my good ships have a little business to do. And if Elder Semple is loyal, his wife is a Stuart woman; a Popery woman.”

“Come! Come! You must take care, Jansen, and then pray God Almighty to have care of you, too. Such words are not wise.”

“Yes, yes. They are wise and well known. Madame Semple is an enemy of King George. Speak but the King’s name, and she will echo it with ‘Royal Charlie’ or the ‘Bonnie Prince’ or other words that will be anigh to high treason.”

“Well then, Jan. I also dislike Janet Semple. She is a willful woman, that will have her way, and her way is not a good way. A woman should ask her husband how to talk, eh, Jan?”

“Good! You say what is true. Madame Semple is not particular in her principles, and she cannot keep quiet her busy tongue. Katrina, do you know any woman who can be silent? Give her your right hand, a good friend she will be. Well, then, to make short work of the Semples’ neighboring, let me tell you, I like not their son Neil. Have you noticed the silent, haughty youngster? From the Kirke he always manages to walk home by the side of our Virginia. I cannot bear that young man.”

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"Very little I notice him, and Virginia thinks not at all of him. Trouble not thyself on that likelihood."

"There is Bram Van Heemskirk, too; a father must have fears for the young men. A girl like Virginia can not escape their eyes, and their foolishness."

"Virginia Van Vroom will look higher than Bram Van Heemskirk, or Neil Semple. For a great lady we have brought up our daughter."

"*Christus!* A great lady? Not so, Katrina. I will marry my daughter to a fine Dutch sailor."

"And who then is this fine Dutch sailor?"

"It is Batavius De Vries. Since ever Virginia was a little child on my knees, I have been thinking what man she must marry. Now, I have made up my mind."

"A long time it has taken thee."

"Well, then, I am very precise in my way of thinking. I must have testimony to honesty and religion and respectability. That is right, eh, Katrina?"

"Yes, it is right—but——"

"Many years I have been watching Batavius. I am satisfied with the man. I have made up my mind, slowly, yes, but it is now settled; and I do not have to make it over some more. Batavius shall be my son, and my partner, and all will go well with us. Already he has bought one-third of *The Crowned Bears*, and he has gold in the Amsterdam Bank, and in the London Bank, and much land he own here in New York. I have thought of these things, for that is my way, and I am satisfied with all I have planned and it shall come to pass."

"I know not. Virginia has some thoughts of her own about her marriage. She only laughs at Batavius; when sets him by the side of Joris Artaveldt she will not make some comparisons."

"That is the way of a young girl, silly and scornful."

not knowing the thing good for her. Those two Artaveldts are my uttermost dislike—father and son, I hate them both. I am owing Justice Artaveldt for some words I do not forget.”

“Too touchy art thou. Courteous and friendly is Justice Artaveldt to thee, always so. I have noticed that.”

“The *tuyvel* take his courtesy and friendliness! I know not the kind he uses. Listen, Katrina! It may be ten days ago, I was leaning on my front gate, smoking my pipe and thinking of many things, but not thinking very hard. By and by I see Mr. Justice Artaveldt coming down the street, and something said to me, ‘Trot back into the house, Jan; thou art wearing thy worst-sleeved waistcoat, and the silk cap on thy head is frayed and soiled’; and I was turning on my heel, when I got better counsel: ‘Stay where thou art. At thy own gate, and on thy own land, thou art standing.’ So I moved not an inch, and I thought the Justice would touch his beaver and pass on—but, no! He wanted to talk about the press-gang, and he thought as I was a sea man I would say some things.”

“But thou did not?”

“To Gustave Artaveldt? No fool am I! I knew nothing, I cared nothing; I said I was thinking of De Lancey, who I heard was sick; and then Artaveldt takes up the De Lanceys, and calls on all men to honor them. Such a noble family! Such great men! So brave! So handsome! ‘But that is in the blood, Captain,’ he went on; ‘it takes a thousand years to make a gentleman, and the Artaveldts, bless the Almighty! could hark back much longer than that’; and so he gave me a lot of names—dukes and counts—Flanders men all of them—I think that.”

“No, no, Jan! The de Artaveldts come from Lorraine; they are a fine family.”

“This, or that, Katrina, I care not; but I was such a

damned fool, that I, too, must begin to boast about my ancestors. I said they were none of them men forgotten. I told him how Bernard Van Vroom first took sail through the steaming seas around Borneo, Sumatra, Java, and Japan; how there was a headland in Japan called after him, and also an island in the Javanese Sea. 'And you may see, Mr. Justice,' I said, 'in the Town Hall at Rotterdam, a big map hanging, showing Van Vroom's voyages and discoveries.' "

"And what said he to that, Jan?"

"He said, 'The sea was a great continent, and no one knew what happened, or what did not happen, on it. But that with sword, and lance in hand, the Artaveldts had taken, and held the lands on which they had been living for thirty generations. He said the holding of these lands was the law and the testimony of the Artaveldt nobility, and he thought it was a poor man who could not serve himself'—and many words such like."

"Thou should have told him——"

"Wait, Katrina. I did tell him. I said the state maps and the named lands were good titles to the Van Vrooms' services to Holland; and, moreover, I said I thought it was more honorable to serve our moder-country than to serve our own hands. And I asked leave to remind him that the Van Vrooms had not forgotten to look a little after their own affairs, seeing that we owned land this day, sold by Governor Stuyvesant to my great-great-grandfather, who was also among the Order of Great Burghers established by Governor Stuyvesant. And the smile on Artaveldt's face was such a smile as I wished to sweep off with one movement of my big hand—but I put my pipe in my mouth, and held my peace."

"A wise thing for thee to do."

"A hard thing for me to do—say that."

"And what answer made the man to thy words?"

"He asked me what a Great Burgher might be—was he a baron, or squire, or lord of the manor? And I answered he was a rich man Mr. Justice—and my voice was loud and sharp—a very rich man, who could pay for the honor of being among the twenty names that were then the aristocracy of New York. So he asked then, how much they paid? And I told so much as five hundred guilders, but for this they filled all the public offices, and were exempt from attainder and confiscation of goods. So then he asked, what of the rest? and I told him they were called Small Burghers, and paid fifty guilders and had the freedom of trade only. He said most extraordinary! He wondered that he had never heard of the Order, but he thought he must pay his five hundred; for in these days of treason it would be worth while to be exempt from attainder and confiscation of goods."

"Well then?"

"I said, it is past. It only lasted eleven years, for then came Lord Lovelace and the English, and Lovelace made all citizens equal. Then Artaveldt thumped his stick on my brick sidewalk and cried out—'Very proper indeed! I am against an artistocracy of wealth! It is the most vulgar and offensive of all distinctions! It is a pernicious difference! abominably pernicious!' And so lifting his beaver, and touching his brow with the gold knob on his stick, he walked off as pompous as if from all the French kings and counts he was descended; and just then I had no words ready for him."

"Very good was that. Silence is the unbearable answer. Keep thy anger secret, Jan. After all, what was it but a few words? They were nothing. His son Joris is a man that all praise. He is Virginia's friend since these many years. With him she first went on the ice,

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her lessons he helped her to learn, to dance he taught her, he——”

“To the heart of my dislike, thou art coming. I think Joris Artaveldt is in love with Virginia, and that foolishness he will be teaching to her next.”

“Dost thou think all the young men in New York are in love with Virginia?”

“All of them that have any light in their eyes are in love with her. See then, for that very cause I have chosen her a husband to make her happy and give her no adventures. It is adventures that make women wrong and unhappy.”

“Art thou thinking of Batavius De Vries? She will never marry that man. I have told thee. Cast that thought out of thy mind.”

“That I will not. For seven years it has been the first and the last thought. About it I have now no doubts, not one. That is the end of the matter. I am right.”

“Just now it is the end, for I hear the boat scraping the shingle. That will be Rose and Virginia returning.”

“Where have they been?”

“On the river with Joris Artaveldt.”

“What did I tell thee? See now!”

“Well, then, I think Joris may be in love with Rose. His father would like it so.”

“I, too, would like it so. It would be a great satisfaction to me, and for once Justice Artaveldt and Jansen Van Vroom would be of the same mind. And, Katrina, if this friend of Virginia's be Lady Rose Harley, then in my house let her be called Lady Rose. I do not object to titles, not at all. Whoever is good and noble may say so. Disguising the matter is improper.”

“Lady Rose is handsome enough and proud enough to be

a queen, but she loves Virginia like a dear sister. So soon as she saw her, she loved her."

"She could not help that—no one could. I have on my Flemish ruffles and long waistcoat, so then I will stay here and make welcome to my house this English lady—that will be proper, and she will expect it."

Madame did not answer. She went into the house and her husband followed her. Together they stood at a window watching the two girls slowly stepping up the flight of low, stone stairs leading from the beach to the first grassy lawn. They were hand in hand; they were singing and laughing at the song which they were evidently only learning, for they corrected themselves, and went over a strain, and then ceased suddenly, and stood watching the apparently troublesome task of fastening the boat.

Jan's eyes lengthened and widened with delight, and his face was transfigured with love as he watched them. Presently young Artaveldt came bounding up the steps and passing gently between the girls, took a hand of each. Then the Captain moved restlessly.

"Katrina," he said, "what a great thing it is to be young! Yes, indeed, what a great thing it is to be crazy!"

Katrina slipped her hand into his—"We, too, Jan! We are crazy yet! Would thou be wiser?"

"To be a fool with thee, I am content. Look once at Virginia. Is she not the fairest creature God ever made?"

"She is thy only daughter, but thou must not forget thy dear son."

"My boy can fight for his will, and his right, but my sweet Virginia must be cared for every moment. The darling can not say this or that for herself."

"A great mistake that is. Cross thy Virginia's will, just once, and thou wilt have thy big hands full. Look at the Lady Rose, is she not very lovely?"

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"She is like a gypsy. For such a dark woman I care not. She is nothing to Virginia but a great difference—yet I have known some men who thought much of dark women. I understand not such men. She will match young Artaveldt very well. May a good Fate send a gold ring between them."

Madame nodded her head, and kept her eyes on the two girls and the young man approaching. The glory of the setting sun was behind them, the young spring flowers at their feet, the young green leaves above their head, and all the winds of Love and Hope blowing softly through their lives. They were yet in a world that expected every good thing from everybody. So they came into the presence of the Captain and his wife with a confident joyfulness, and the Captain rose to the occasion. He gave Lady Rose a welcome full of honor and kindness, and she rewarded him with a bewildering glance from her large brown eyes, and spread out her skirts in such a coquetishly alluring courtesy that there leaped from some long forgotten corner of the Captain's memory a bow of grace and admiration to answer it. He was astonished and pleased with his own aptitude, and he took an instant liking to the beautiful girl who had caused him to behave with so much gallantry and fashion.

They had trooped together into the large houseplace; they were wind-blown, and sun-flecked, and hungry; and Virginia asked anxiously about the tea hour. Then Madame came delightedly to the front of emergencies. Her face—strong, sympathetic, and sensible—beamed upon the inquirer; her words were full of hospitable kindness. She called servants to lay the damask cloth, and then, assisted by Rose and Virginia, she set in order the china and crystal and silver necessary. In a short time the large table held one of those simply luxurious meals called "high teas"; and, oh, the innocent mirth of the girls, the ringing laugh-

ter of Artaveldt, the loving care of Madame, the delightful dictation of the Captain! Such repasts are not all material; a spirit informs them; they are a kind of household sacrament, and cannot be classed with mere physical feeding of flesh and blood.

After tea was over they gathered round the Captain, and it would have been a sour and sullen nature that would not have joyed itself in the exquisite home picture the big room presented. For though the living room of the family, it was a very handsome apartment—large, lofty, and furnished with a quiet splendor no one could have believed the outcome of the imagination of the big sailor who had planned it. The floor was of dark oak, and well covered with soft, rich rugs; the fireplace was a Dutch poem. It was of immense size, with jambs of glazed tiles representing scenes from the fatherland, mostly of famous ships and water ways; its accessories and fittings, even to the broad, long fender, of brightest steel. The walls were paneled halfway up in native woods. Above the paneling there was a dark green background, adorned with pictures of great value—a Titian, a Rembrandt, and three of those famous landscapes with figures by Adrian Van der Velde which were even at that day so rare and so precious in the homes of the Netherlands. The furniture was all of black oak, finely carved, trimmed and banded with brightest steel. In one big Nuremberg cabinet there were so many drawers, and tiny closets, and hiding places, that Madame after twenty years' possession was sometimes surprised by the discovery of a fresh one. Crystal and china filled the corner cupboard, silver sconces were placed at intervals on the walls, the high chimneypiece bore the arms and sea trophies of the Van Vrooms, the sideboard and cabinets the silver punch bowls and wine jugs, the six-fold candlesticks and trays and snuffers, the goblets and vases and drinking cups,

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—among them a few very ancient of black leather bound with silver and bearing the arms of the Van Vrooms on their side,—and in two cases the model of the ships, in which Adrian and Sebastian Van Vroom had found out rich and strange lands for their mother Holland.

On this evening we may seat the two girls and the young man and the old Captain on the scarlet rug before the white hearth, and imagine Madame softly moving from cupboard to cupboard, and throw over all the glowing, fitful radiance of the blazing hickory logs; and thus give to our memory the background of many a Dutch family of that day in all its simple refinement and wealth of household affection.

For half an hour the Captain smoked in silence, watching covertly the three young people who were whispering and laughing softly and trying to persuade Joris to do something he was not inclined to do. His reluctance at last worried the Captain, and he asked a trifle crossly—

“What is it, then, that you will not do for two pretty women? I wish that they should ask me some favor, and I would show you how a young man should carry himself.”

“If they wanted you to sing, Captain, would you start off like a bird?” asked Joris.

“Like a man I would sing. If they liked it, very good; if they liked it not, that would be their own fault, not mine.”

“It is only a little song, Captain,” said Rose, “set to a miracle of a pretty tune, and it is about Virginia. Sing it, Mr. Lieutenant;” and then, with a masterful nod of her pretty head, “Sing it, I command you!”

Then he touched his brow with his hand, and broke into a light, lilting measure, that took the heart and feet with it; for as the words fell tripping in musical cadence from his lips, the feet of Virginia and Rose tapped the measure on the floor to them:—

" Lovely Dutch American,
 Fairest of the fair;
 Cheeks like tinted lilies,
 Braided golden hair.
 Eyes as blue as heaven,
 Lips as roses sweet;
 Graceful as a fairy,
 Every way complete.

" Dearest, sweetest maiden,
 From your golden hair
 To your silver shoe latch,
 None with you compare.
 Angel, may I tell you—— "

" No. Not one word more may you say. I like not what you sing. It is not proper nor respectable."

" Sure, Captain," cried Rose, " it is extremely proper. All the English quality make songs about the enchanting creatures they adore."

" For the English quality that may do; it is the English way. My daughter is Dutch, thank the Giver of all Good! I will not have songs made about *Meine Kinder* [My child]—songs that will be heard, and copied, and be in every fool's mouth. For *one* good man is my daughter. Shall I let one hundred men sing a song about her? I will not. Moreover, I like not men to call my Virginia an angel. Men who are discontented with good women, and want angels, are great fools; good women are too good for most men. All lies! and yet in this manner life goes on. Oh, I say all this politely, for I am always polite—when good women are in my company"—and he bowed his big head towards Rose and Virginia.

Then Virginia rose, and knelt at his knees, and put her arms around his neck, and drew his face, shining with love, down to her own. And her kiss made him in a moment

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placable as a baby; he smiled proudly and apologetically over the darling head nestling in his breast, and added in a voice that was thrilled through with tenderness—

“For her sake! For her sake, I said some strong words. No harm I meant. They were right words;—if they were wrong I would say, even to a little child, thy pardon!”

Then Joris rose and saluted Van Vroom—

“It is I who must say ‘Thy pardon.’ I have done foolishly in my ignorance. It is but a paltry excuse to plead ‘I meant no harm.’”

“We are all equally guilty, Captain,” cried Rose. “We are all sorry for the indiscretion. So you must forgive us all together.”

“Well, then, we are reconciled. And here at last comes the good mother to put all right. Katrina, a little scolding I have had to make. Maybe it prepares me for a big one. For it is now six o’clock, and I must go to the meeting at Fraunce’s Tavern to-night.”

“Not to-night, Jansen.”

“Yes, to-night—all our men of standing are to be there.”

“Does your father go, Joris?” asked Madame.

“My father will certainly be there. He wished me also to be present.”

“And why not?” asked the Captain.

“Sir, I will wait until the talking is over. When the sword is to draw, I shall be wherever there is fighting to do.”

“Talking and fighting!” exclaimed Madame. “It is all foolishness! What now is the matter?”

“England has a sick king, Katrina; and his ministers are all gone crazy. They want to pass an act which will tax us sixty thousand pounds every year.”

“We have paid more than that, Captain! and my father thinks we must pay this new tax.”

"What if it should cost them one hundred millions of pounds to try and collect it? How much profit will they have, Lieutenant Artaveldt?"

"Treason! Rank treason!" cried Rose.

"No! No, my Lady Rose. A question I ask, that is all; a little sum in arithmetic." And turning to Joris Artaveldt he said, "In thy place I would go to the meeting. This is a quarrel in which the young men will be wanted. Many will be waiting on to-night's meeting—thy absence would be noted."

Then a rapid glance passed between Virginia and the young man, and he said, "I will go with you, sir, if you permit me that honor."

"And Jansen," added Madame anxiously, "do keep thyself well in hand, and say not too much. Thou hast many temper-trying words."

"I will keep them in my heart, Katrina, unless the English party provoke me too far. It is hard to be quiet with the English. No one can suit them, very often they can not suit themselves; and if at New York they begin to rail, I will not bite my tongue to keep it quiet. No, indeed!"

"New York!"

And he took the word from Katrina—"New York!" he cried, and his voice fell to tenderest modulations—"We love New York, Katrina; right or wrong we love New York—just as we love our moeder."

Then the two men went rather noisily away, and Virginia and Rose were left very much alone. Rose threw herself into the large, luxurious chair of the master of the house. Virginia took a low stool and sat down at her side. Madame went to the big kitchen to watch the negro women at their spinning. There were eight of them stepping before the big wheels, and droning out some barbaric strain

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which a man, said to be one hundred and seventeen years old, was strumming on an instrument of his own making. The scene was weird, African, gloomy, almost demoniac. It was also more than real; it had all the unbearable reality of a dream. The tall, somber forms, with one impish hump-back flitting among them, looked and moved in the dim light like monstrous shadows. Their black faces, their glowing eyes, their turbans of dead white or glaring colors, affected the imagination and made it believe they were the visions of ages, and ages, and ages ago. And this fancy was accentuated by their restless movements, their untranslatable words, and the passionate, bewildering atmosphere they unconsciously created. All these things were as fantastic surroundings for the calm, benignant white woman watching them, as any vision from the under world,—though it were steeped in unfathomable dolor, and tintured with incipient madness,—could evoke.

Madame appeared to be conscious of this influence and yet unconscious of its source and power; for she joined the girls frequently, and was restless, and like a woman troubled by unseen forces. It had never occurred to her that a conjunction of these dark, alien natures might be actively inimical to mental and bodily sanity. She admitted "being ill at ease"; and she had "all sorts of queer feels about her"; then, she explained, she was "very anxious about the Captain."

"More words will be in his mouth than his good sense can manage," she said to Virginia, and Virginia answered—

"When father speaks, mother, he says just the words that are needed. Every one listens to him. Father has much wisdom."

"That is so;—but sometimes silence is the best wisdom."

So Katrina went backward and forward, taking thought

for all and suffering nothing to be wasted. And Virginia and Rose sat by the fire and talked; that is, Rose talked and Virginia listened, full of wonder and interest. For at that day the life, and especially the court life, of old England was an everlasting romance to Americans; and when Rose talked of Cressacre Castle and its splendid life, and of the marvelous goings on in London society, Virginia was as happily curious as a child reading a fairy story.

Finally they wearied a little, and Rose wondered "if that young god of war, Lieutenant Artaveldt, would return with the Captain?" Virginia was sure he would not.

"Then I propose we go upstairs; my slippers hurt me, the fastenings are too tight;" and Virginia rose and began to light the night candles, and Rose stooped to unfasten the silver latches of her shoes.

Suddenly the door was thrown open, some one entered, there was a cry of wonder and joy, and Rose, rising, saw a handsome youth holding Virginia to his heart, kissing her face, calling her "dear Virginia; sweet Virginia!" while Virginia was evidently returning his endearments. For a moment or two Rose watched them with a curious pleasure, then she cried out—

"Most amazing! Most delightful! I never, no, I never, saw the like. It is beyond belief! It is beautifully impossible! Are you in your senses, Virginia Van Vroom, or am I dreaming?"

"It is my brother, Rose, my dear, dear brother Arent! I am so happy I forgot you."

"That is easily seen; perhaps you will now remember."

"Forgive me, Arent, this is my dear friend, Lady Rose Harley."

Then Rose and Arent looked at each other, and their eyes, meeting, dilated and flashed, while the blood rushed crimson over their faces. For Love, that old, old troubler,

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which times its birth from the first glance, had really introduced them to each other. Rose felt as if something secret and incredible had happened. For a moment or two she was conscious of a celestial ecstasy, that her common sense rebuked as an invasion into her proper orbit of an influence alien and perhaps dangerous. But to Arent all heaven and earth was in that one bright flash. He could not speak, he did not wish to speak. To multiply that wonderful moment by one thousand would have made him a god. Rose understood. She saw the miracle that had taken place; and she laughed softly, and said—

“Captain, ten times welcome! Virginia and I will now have a servant. For I do assure you, the men here are so full of their petty politics that they do not deserve a courtesy in the way of wages. Virginia, where are you going?”

“To tell my mother that Arent is here. I will be back—in two minutes I will be back.”

Then Arent, with all his soul in his face, stood still looking straight into the lovely countenance that seemed to cast supernal light upon his own. He tried to speak, and quite naturally—all his reason being swallowed up on a pleasure so great as to be next to paining—he blundered into the impertinence of Rose’s nationality, a thing he cared nothing at all about.

“You are English, I suppose?”

He said the words mechanically, for he was looking, not listening as he spoke. And Rose perceived his mistake, excused it in her heart, but answered it with a raillery Arent did not know how to take.

“English? No, I am American, New York, but fairly true and honest—at least, when it is convenient to me.”

And then she spread out her skirts, and sent one more flashing bolt of love from the heaven of her eyes, and left

him alone. And he was so confounded that he forgot to open the door for her.

As soon as it was too late, he was shocked at his want of politeness. "I shall not earn even a courtesy in the way of wages," he said; "but it is all so amazing, so delightful! Am I in my senses? Am I Arent Van Vroom, captain of the privateer *Manhattan*, or some other man? I wonder me what has happened."

Then his mother came joyfully into the room, and in her embrace he realized his personality. "Arent! Arent! My boy! My boy!" she cried; and her boy kissed her lips, and stroked her hair, and put his bewitched senses under those motherly compensations which fill the heart with comfort, with sweet satisfaction, and the great peace of possession.

Virginia quickly disappeared and Madame was glad of it. She wanted her boy all to herself. She watched him eating the meal she had hastily set before him, and fed her hungry mother heart with the sight of his beauty and the music of his voice. She did not ask him where he had been, or from whence he had sailed. It was sufficient for her that he was at her side, that she could touch his hands, and see him lift his bright, steadfast eyes to meet hers. Politics troubled neither of them. Madame said, "There is a deal of uneasiness in New York now," and Arent answered—

"That is so. I thought to myself as I hurried through the city that it was gone mad in all forms of madness. What is the matter at all with such sensible people? Will the fever catch?"

"Your father has taken it. I know not how it will go. It is old England, of course. Why are they so foolish over the sea?"

"Well, then, mother, the most able Englishmen retired

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to New York when Charles the First was king. It seems also that you have an English guest; tell me, mother, about her."

"You have seen her then?"

"Yes; and Virginia said she was Lady Rose—I forget the other name."

"Harley. Forget all her name, if you are a wise man. She is not of you kind. She is the granddaughter of the Earl of Cressacre. Her father is Lord Francis Harley, his youngest son. He is now with the English army of occupation in Canada. His daughter was left in the care of Governor Colden. She likes not the Coldens, but she has a great love for thy sister. It is a love that has grown very quickly, so then it may soon grow cold."

"Where is the young girl's mother?"

"Dead these many years; she was brought up by her aunt, the Duchess of Portman, by whom, Rose says, she was 'laboriously trained in all the foibles of the people of the pinnacle.'"

"And tell me, mother, what brought her from the pinnacle of English society to New York?"

"She was sick, she was weary of society, she wished to be with her father on the voyage, she has much property here, her mother was a New Yorker, Lady Rose was born in Maiden Lane,—many reasons she can give. Who knows which if any may be the true one? She is sweet and good; we do not ask her any questions. Colonel Harley may come for her any day,—to-morrow even he may come."

"Dear mother, I hope not. Such a charming girl! I would like to see plenty more of her."

"I tell thee, thy moeder tells thee, think in no way at all about Lady Rose. A thousand objections thy father and her friends would make. Take these words into thy heart. They are for thy peace and welfare. And now thou must

go to sleep. If thy father comes, and thou art here, it will be morning before the talk will cease. So then, my Arent, good-night, and forget not what I have said about the beautiful English lady. A thousand objections are there, and on every one thy father will fight thee, tooth and nail."

Then Arent bid his mother a long, sweet good-night, and went to his room. He did not sleep for many hours. A kind of glory encompassed his thoughts. Nothing that his mother had said influenced him. His own ancestry was good, and his vigorous, honest, downright spirit was not a slave to noble birth; thinking an honest man enough. Put to the straight question he would probably have said in sentiment, what a great poet said for him, "Straw for you, gentillesse." As for objections, they slipped away from consciousness. For objections are like cats, very treacherous; they always alight on their feet, they see in the dark, they have nine lives, and to pit them against Love is sheer waste of time. An army of objections could not get the better of a true love. For Love knows hidden paths. Love has reasons, of which reason knows nothing, for

"In the court of Love fancies are
Just as valid as affidavits;
And the vaguest allusions, quite
As much evidence as testimony
Taken upon oath."

CHAPTER TWO

THE BEGINNING OF TROUBLE

It was very late when Jansen returned home, and he was under such great excitement, Katrina would not suffer him to talk. "I will give thee thy glass of hot Hollands and thy pipe, Jansen," she said, "and to-morrow morning will be soon enough to tell us about the King's business. Besides, here is news of our own. Arent came home to-night." And greatly to Katrina's amazement, the Captain looked annoyed at his son's advent.

"Art thou not pleased?" she asked with some anger. "More than one year he has been away—on thy business too."

"I wish, then, he had had the good sense to stay, now, a little longer."

"He heard of the French peace at Kingston, and then took a cargo to Boston, where he found every man talking of the King's tyranny, and of what would be the end of it."

"Yes; and what had Arent to do with the King's tyranny? Always those Boston men are applauding themselves for the great things they are going to do. Arent should have been deaf and blind to such goings on. His duty is on the sea, where there is no peace, nor word of peace, of any kind. For so long as there are French and Spanish ships prowling about where they have no business, there is no peace for good American privateers. In our peace with France, I read not one word about peace on the sea. And when I had a good ship under me, I was at war always with the French and Spanish. No business have their ships on our waters. I

did not expect Arent to hear of the peace—no right had he to hear of it. In his place nothing could have made me understand such a foolish thing—on the sea, too, where a good sailor, on a good ship like our *Manhattan*, makes the peace when he wants it, and not one minute before.”

“Well, then, talk to Arent in the morning.”

“Where is he?”

“In his bed, asleep.”

“Very undutiful is that. Thou should have made him wait for me.”

“Not so. He was tired to death, and to-night thou art not fit to talk with reason to any one. Were the men at the meeting all mad? for thou hast caught a bad temper from them.”

Then Jan laughed. “To-night,” he said, “we had plenty of good Christian railling, and some men said so much they will not say another word to each other, not so long as they live. De Lancey was red-hot with pride and temper. ‘All through the city,’ he said, ‘treason is simmering.’ The Livingstons only waited to see how De Lancey went, and then on the other side they trumpeted. As for Rutgers, so civilly impertinent and sarcastic were his remarks that Elder Semple advised ‘the Government to look after the vituperative Rutgers.’”

“And you held your peace, Jan? That was right.”

“Well, then, a few words I said. The example was bad, Katrina. But it was only the truth I told them, for always I speak the truth; a great pity it is, that truth can only be on one side. As you know, I stand on the side of truth always. For truth I adore. You can’t kill the truth, Katrina. For eternal truth there is no funeral.”

“Now, Jan, thy tongue is growing too hot, and too over-doing; go to thy bed. It is sleep thou wants. About the meeting thou shalt talk in the morning.”

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"To bed! I will not be driven by anyone. No!"

"Well then, take thy own time. Thou hast kept me out of my bed too long. Look once at the clock. It is past midnight."

"*Ja!* Always thou keeps thy clock one hour before the right time."

"And if I did not, we should soon be on the wrong side of everything. But what then? If it is thy will to sit up all the night long, sit up. As for me, I am going to get a little sleep!"

"But thou art taking away the Hollands. Leave the bottle on the table."

"It is not good company for thee. I will take it away. Good-night, Jan. I am very tired and sleepy."

"My poor Katrina! Well, then, I am tired. I am sleepy, just like thee. Light thou the candle, and I will cover up the fire."

"No; thou light the candle. I will cover the fire. I am sure thou art tired. Thou hast such a great heart, so much thou feels, thy country is so dear to thee; and as for New York——"

"I love New York! All her streets run through my heart! Many of them I saw christened. I know the men after whom they are called. New York is like my own beautiful daughter; shall I sit still and see her insulted, robbed, bound, made to serve, where mistress she should be? I will not. To my last guilder, to my last breath, I will stand by New York—and all her good sons are of my mind, Katrina."

To these and similar reflections he at length slept, but Katrina heard him arguing hotly in the world of dreams. It troubled her. During the French war she had seen so many brave men leave home, and never come back again! But every day is a fresh day, and brings with it its own

strength and cheer. Events that looked threatening and full of trouble at midnight, were bright with sunshine and hope in the morning. England would do justly. America would be forbearing. Life would go on in its usual even tenor when the quarreling element had had its say; "for the days go round, and always we get along somehow," said Madame as a finality.

Such was the breakfast talk of the women; for the Captain slept until the morning was far advanced, and Arent was equally dilatory; so that if they had been anxious about political affairs, they could only have waited as patiently as possible. But they were not at all anxious. Virginia and Rose sat at a large japanned table, making pink rosettes for their fancy aprons, and their conversation was entirely about their own affairs.

"I am in a fright about my clothes bespoke in London," said Rose. "What will the new customs laws do with them? There is a red damask piece, an orange-tawny crêpe, a white and amber lutestring, a blue taffeta, bone lace and fripperies of all kinds; besides a white satin mantua, and, above all things, a pink parasol. When I receive them, I shall be sweetly dressed; and I shall give myself a parcel of airs, especially if the Colden girls are present."

"They are nice girls."

"My darling Virginia, they are perfect. I hate perfection. Such lofty intellects! Such complete accomplishments! Heavens! What I have endured from a society so superior to me. Their talk is all of science, or the stars, or of eminent men fit to correspond with their father—that is, on unsacred days; on the Sabbath, it is wholly theological. For you must know Doctor Colden is Scotch; 'from Dunse in the Mearns of Berwickshire'—I feel sure that is the whole name. Grammercy! I have heard it often enough to be doubly sure."

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"And what can they know of theology. That is for the Domine to talk about."

"Little innocent! the Domine assists at the considerations. Last Sunday it was about the justice of the Almighty, and that led them to John Calvin, and John Calvin—to the devil."

"Oh, Rose!"

"Such subjects are too high for me. But, oh, to be with General Monckton! After the beautifully virtuous, intellectual life at Governor Colden's, an English man-of-war might help me to feel that I was not quite unworthy to live!" and Virginia answered this tirade only with a little push of her elbow, and a lifted face full of love and laughter. Rose promptly kissed it. "You see now," she added, "why I love you so—you don't talk of the stars and philosophy, nor even of John Calvin or Mr. Franklin, nor of books, books, books! I hate books. I would rather read a love letter than a book, any nice girl would."

"My father reveres John Calvin. We never talk of him commonly. It would not be right. We cannot understand him."

"Such wisdom! It is miraculous! It is most comforting! Is it permitted us to talk of that handsome brother of yours?"

"Of Arent?"

"Is that his delightful name? I am already in love with him. His appearance is most bespeaking."

"Oh, no, dear Rose! A little amusement you would find it. To Arent it would be the great thing in the whole world. He knows not how to pretend anything. Do not fall in love with him. Do not make him fall in love with you. Only a sailor—a trader is he."

"Upon my honor, Virginia, I care not what he is. If I could win his love, I would count it the greatest conquest I shall ever make."

As she spoke the Captain entered the room. He bluffed his tardiness, saying, "Kindly excuse my being late. At the meeting I was kept long last night—in my position that was proper. Virginia, I hear thy brother Arent has returned; where then is he?"

"He also was late to breakfast; and after he had eaten it, I think that he went to the stable. He said he wished to see the horses. I think perhaps he went to smoke a little."

"Very good; there is no harm in a clay pipe. But why should Arent go to the stable? Of horses he knows nothing at all. A horse he rides as if he was rowing the poor horse."

"My fader, our Arent went to sea when he was no more than twelve years old."

"That is the truth, and many better things than riding a horse the sea has taught him. Sink or swim, our Arent is a sailor, every inch of him. In great storms, I have watched him at the wheel. His joy, his triumph, it was to get the best of the roaring winds and the big waves. So clever he would lift his ship over them, so steady guide her through the black troughs, shouting to her many strong words, petting her, praising her, or if she made creaking and whimpering too much, scolding a little—'that was not the way to behave, she must be of great courage, she must fight for her life. Did she want to go to the bottom, and take good men with her?' and all the time just shaking his head at the lashing of the sea water, cutting him like knives. Little girls, at such hours I thanked God with all my heart that I was a father;" and Captain Jansen's blue eyes grew misty, and looked away to some far-off horizon of his memory.

"When he leaves the sea, all about horses he can soon learn," continued the Captain. "That was his father's way. Now I can drive as well as any man, and I could ride also, but I wish not to ride; and a good trade I can

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make in horses, as good as any one ought to make—eh, Virginia?"

"Thou art clever in all things, fader. I remember me when thou bought our carriage horses. Many laughed at thee then, but in the end thou could laugh at them."

Then Rose lifted her face, full of inquiry, and glanced at the Captain; and he answered the mute question with unaffected pride—"Yes, yes, that is the truth. I saw the four horses, and my heart was sorry for them. Worn out were they, ill-used, hungry, uncared-for. For a few guilders I bought them. Then into my good stable they came. They were cleaned, they were comforted, they were fed on the best of corn and hay; and I visited them, and many kind words I said to them. Very soon they grew strong, and also so handsome that Justice Artaveldt is sick at his heart every time he sees them. What say you, Lady Rose, to this horse trade? For my part, I think it was a good one."

"Sure, sir, there could be no better. But why does it make Mr. Justice Artaveldt angry?"

"Because horses are his great passion, and he likes it not if any man have finer animals than his own. With many he has quarreled on this subject. I do not permit that he shall quarrel with me."

"But he has many fine horses, father, and Joris Artaveldt rides so that it is a great pleasure only to watch him."

"Of Arent I was talking, Virginia; of Joris Artaveldt I was not talking;" and at these words Arent, with his mother, came into the room. The girls smiled at him, each moving her chair a little, so that he could place his chair between them. As he walked forward, he stopped at his father's side, and laid his hand on his father's shoulder, and the look that passed between the men was better than a blessing.

"Arent, my son, how goes it with thee?"

"Well, my fader. And with thee?"

"All is well. And the ship? Has she done her duty? Has she behaved like a good ship? To New York why did thou bring her? In a queer temper is New York just now."

"For that reason, I came for thy counsel. Will there be some fighting, I wonder?"

"Who can tell? Our rights we must have lawfully, if possible; lawfully with violence, if need be. So far went all our men of business last night; and so far they did not go without meaning to go further if—if—well, the 'if' is a big word. For my part, I will hope for the best; but if it come to the worst, a wise man will obey necessity—and I hope I am a wise man; yes, I hope so."

"When I landed last night, I thought to find the city at rest; but no, it was wide awake—the houses lighted, the women standing at the open doors, the men talking on the street, the youths—yes and the school boys—parading in bands, singing——"

"To be sure! One may sing what they dare not speak—a song, is a song, no more. I heard them, and I asked about it, for it is my way to ask when I do not know, and I was told they were verses that young Doctor Bogart had written. And while Bastian waited for me, he got them into his ears, and sang them all the time he drove me home—in this way they went"—and the old man tapped on the table lightly with his pipe stem, to keep the time of the lilt they were set to—

"'King George is making our band
Too tight to the mother land;
Let him learn that wide will wear;
Let him learn that tight will tear.'

"Not bad was the idea, so some room in my mind

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I gave it; but well I know, if Tim Bogart's father had heard Tim singing against the King, out of Trinity churchyard his ghost would have hurried, to pull Tim's nose for him; of that I am sure."

Rose at this remark laughed heartily. "Some day, Captain," she said, "I will tell the King that story. I will show him the city alight and awake at midnight, the women talking treason at the open doors, the men and the boys shouting Tim Bogart's verses on the streets, and old Mr. Bogart in his shroud hurrying out of Trinity churchyard to pull his son's nose for making up songs against the anointed king. How the King will laugh, and snap out his little interjections—'what! what! eh? eh? well! well! I should like to knight the old gentleman—but—but——' and so sadly shaking his head, His Majesty will turn away with a look of injury. For I do assure you, Captains both, that George the Third will not acknowledge that even dead Englishmen have gone beyond his power to reward or punish. Some day, my darling Virginia, you will be with me at Windsor Castle, and see this little comedy."

"That some day comes not for my daughter, Lady Rose. I say this kindly because it is the truth."

"Listen, Jan," interrupted Madame impatiently; "fifty different things have I to do, and thou wilt not get on with thy story. It is about the meeting last night we want to hear. Wilt thou tell us straight, or not? Who were present? Who were absent? What did they say? What did Jansen Van Vroom say? What will be done? Or is it all windy talk and passion?"

"Katrina, have I six tongues to answer six questions at one time? An impatient woman art thou, and Doctor Laidlie spoke the truth last night when he said, 'both the clergy and the women had driven horse and foot into this quarrel.' That is their way—I mean the women. In the Holy Scrip-

tures thou may read that; Miriam, Deborah, Esther, Judith, meddling women all of them, and plenty more no doubt."

"Jan, who was chairman? Wert thou?"

"No! No! It is not Jansen Van Vroom's way to get into any place where other people's words can be counted to him. In my own chair I sit, but for two, three, ten hundred people I do not sit. Isaac Low was chairman, a good man, a rich man; he has a fine house on Dock Street——"

At this point Madame glanced at Arent, and he ceased playing with his sister's silks and looked at his father. With large free glances full of that collected stoical expression the old man knew and admired, he asked—

"Should not the Governor have been chairman, father?"

Then Rose, pushing Arent slightly with her elbow and laughing merrily, said, "Permit me to answer the Captain. In my hearing, Governor Colden called this meeting a devil's parliament. A man so learned, so pious, so loyal and royal, would have been taken with a fit of the apoplexy if invited to the chair of such a parliament. Nor would he, sir, have been in the humor to do anything you desire."

"Well then, my lady, men in such grim anger as were the merchants of New York last night were in the humor to do anything they desired, for themselves."

"Were there many people at the meeting, Jan?"

"The Tavern would not hold the half of them, Katrina, and we had to adjourn to the Exchange."

"Father," said Arent, "for many years I have heard men grumbling at England——"

"So? Yes. Good reasons we have had to grumble. Whipped and driven to the last point we have been. First, there was the billeting of nearly three thousand soldiers on New York. Into barracks our homes were turned. Idle, insolent men loafed in our kitchens, used our houses and carriages, quarreled with our servants, or else made them

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as bad as themselves. And, Arent, when a grievance at a man's fireside sits down, very hard it is to bear. This was but the beginning of evil; bad was the billet, the impressment laws were worse. Any British man-of-war who wanted men could board our ships and take what number he desired; or he could land and kidnap our citizens, even off the streets of New York. You know, Arent, how it is?"

"Yes, father. I have been chased many times, but——"

"Never caught, Arent."

"Never once. What could their big, lumbering three-deckers do in a chase with the *Manhattan*. She knew when we put her in her finest dress of snowy canvas what she had to manage; and as soon as I took the wheel she would steal away like a cloud, and pass from the Englishmen's eyes like a dream. Or, if there was the luck of a fog on the horizon, she would cut it like a knife and hide herself behind a veil they dared not lift;"—and when Arent ceased speaking, both men were half-standing, their eyes far off, their arms outstretched, the spirit of the chase and the flight on them.

Rose and Virginia sat motionless, watching, full of interest. Madame was fretted and impatient. "The dinner will be one hour late," she murmured, "and then hurry and ill-temper. The meeting, Jan! Wilt thou not go on with the meeting?"

"Yes, Katrina, yes, I will go on very quickly. I was with Arent a few minutes on the sea, now I am again at the Exchange. This impressment law was the second grievance; the third cut at the root of everything—it was aimed at our judiciary. Always our judges had been commissioned 'during good behavior,' but when the excellent Judge De Lancey died three years ago, Chief Justice Pratt was appointed 'at the pleasure of the King.' So then no man would be judge longer than while he did what the King told

him to do. What think you? Was it not an invitation to bribery and injustice? This change was coupled with an order to increase the salary of the chief justice. Black and angry were the faces of the assembly when it was read, and they told the Governor plainly, no salary at all would they pay unless the commissions of the judges were made *during good behavior*. And at this lawful anger, Governor Colden in New York, and the Lords in London, were amazed and shocked at our undutiful and indecent opposition to His Majesty's just authority."

"But indeed, Captain," said Rose, "I do think George the Third means well; he has good intentions towards America. Upon my honor, I think these are mistakes of judgment—he has good intentions."

"If it comes to that, I take leave to say, Lady Rose, that mistakes make ruin in spite of good intentions—that mistakes will be punished without considering good intentions. For good intentions the world has no time. On the perish is everything in New York, and the King has good intentions! They are dog cheap! They end in smoke and lying! Fiddle-de-dee for his good intentions! A thousand pardons, my Lady Rose. Too good are you to understand the King's good intentions. Excuse my hot temper once; very rude it may be, but—but I can not help it."

"La, Captain, your temper is delightful. I protest that I love to see a man zealous in a good cause. And you must know that I have heard at Governor Colden's and Mr. De Lancey's all the other side had to say for themselves. Indeed, I assure you, they talked more immoderately than you can conceive of. But even among the extreme royalists, many protested against the 'writs of assistance.' And sure I have a world of anxiety on my own account, lest by such authority my box of clothes from London falls into the hands of these men who carry writs of assistance in their pockets."

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"A pack of scoundrels are they! Writs of assistance! Three words of black lying. They are search warrants. And Grenville has ordered all civil, military, and naval officers to assist the revenue officers in their dirty work. Well, then, how is it? Every naval captain in American waters can enter our harbors, and seize any person or cargo they choose to suspect."

"But, father," cried Arent, "such instructions are only threats. They will never be carried out."

"Think you so, Arent? Let me tell you they have jumped on American property like privateers after prizes,—I mean not privateers who are honest men,—of pirates I was thinking."

"In our own family, Arent," said Virginia, "for our cousin Jerome was quietly taking his ship into Newport, and a man-of-war saw her, and he took her away from Jerome, and he took all her cargo away, and Jerome can get no redress;" and Virginia, with a movement of indignation, laid her folded arms upon the table, and looked with kindly sympathy at her father.

Captain Jan's face flushed crimson with passion. "Virginia speaks the truth, Arent," he said hoarsely. "It was the *Vixen*, Captain Harrowgate—a dog of a fellow! damn his impertinence! Please excuse me, ladies, the words were red-hot, they burned my mouth. Yet while men were sore, skinned sore, smarting sore, under these wrongs, Grenville, the eternal fool, flings this stamped paper in our very faces! It takes our money out of our pocket without leave or license. It is highway robbery. It taxes everything we sell, everything we buy, everything we wear, everything we do. No Englishman would stand such an act, and though we be Americans, we are not short of the best men in England. No, I swear I won't pay a farthing for it. In short, I'll be—I'll be damned if I do."

At this moment the clock struck twelve, and Madame counted every stroke and looked reproachfully at her husband. "Thou may see how it is," she said, "ten, eleven, twelve o'clock, and little of thy story told yet. Now then, it must wait; for the table is to set, and I know not if I can have time to make thee a pudding."

"Take the time, it is in thy own say-so, but I like not to miss my pudding."

"To-day it is a roll full of damson jam, boiled."

"That is very good. See thou to it. My story will keep. To the stable I will go and talk a little to my four brothers. Give me some sugar for them, Katrina; they are good fellows."

"They eat more sugar than the household, Jan."

"Safely and handsomely they carry thee here and there, and so proud are they to carry thee."

"There, then! Tell them Katrina sent it."

"Good! Virginia, thou help thy mother. Lady Rose can come to the stable with me—if it is her pleasure."

"Sure, Captain, I would rather help forward the dinner. Upon my word, I also am a little anxious for the damson roll. We poor people of condition never have boiled jam rolls—and I like them."

Jan laughed, and the girls laughed and hurriedly put away their sewing; and Arent, a little reluctantly, accompanied his father. He said something very timidly about 'helping' also, but Jan imperiously took him away. For Jan was undoubtedly a tyrant in his own home, his good tempers being if possible more despotic than his bad ones. However, the stable turned the trend of his thoughts, and the dinner time was, to Madame's relief, entirely given up to gastronomic and hippic conversation. These were safe subjects; they belonged to domestic affairs, and she knew only too well that public questions always touched quarreling

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and fighting and threats of pitiless war. And after dinner Jan wanted his glass of Hollands, and his pipe, and that little hour of quiet that was next door to sleeping.

He went to the long, back stoop for it, and Rose then said to Virginia, "Pray let us put on our new aprons, and walk between the box hedges in the front garden—it may be the prince of dreams will come riding by, and I have not had a civil thing said to me about my beauty for two days."

"A nice account you give of yourself, Rose."

"Faith, I know it; but I should be sweetly served if that handsome Lieutenant Artaveldt would join us—or your very agreeable brother. Lord! what would I give for a little company! Let me tell you soberly, your brother is one of the finest gentlemen I ever met—modest, too, I'll swear."

"He has a heart of gold, Rose."

"If I could steal it! If I could win it!"

"Poor Arent!"

"I am sure he is the perfectest character——"

"Why, then, here comes Arent."

"Alas, I run a strange hazard with such a man! I swear I could cry a little for myself. And yet I am not able to resist the temptation. In truth, I never could resist temptations; they are usually so agreeable to submit to."

In a few moments they were joined by the young sailor, who was wearing his handsomest uniform, and who seemed to have put on with it a commanding air that was very attractive. Rose looked at Virginia and shook her head. She wished Virginia to understand her expression, and negative motion, as indicative of surrender.

"You see how it is," she said softly to Virginia, and Virginia whispered, "I hope that Arent will say a few civil things about your beauty."

"I will give him the opportunity, but Lord, will he take it?"

He did not take it, for as he walked between the girls he talked to them of the sea, and of the ships that go down to the sea. He told them how it looked on fine Sabbaths, when it was a blue wilderness, and the masts of the ships, far and near, were like church spires. He described a ship he had met coming out of the Arctic waters, weather-beaten but forging along, with all God's treasures of hail and snow poured out on her. He made them see the clouds of spray, the swelling sails, and the bending masts of his own good ship the *Manhattan*. He showed them the treacherous waters unquiet and raving with sinister malignity; some one big wave, compact as a wall, charging her with the velocity of a horse regiment; folding its livid gloom over her, and shutting away the sight of the outer world; "but the gallant little ship," he said, "just bared her breast to the storm, won her way in spite of wind and wave, and brought her charge of life and treasure safe to harbor. Well, then," he added, "there are hours when I really think the dear thing has a soul. Yes, indeed, I do!"

No word had been said about Rose's beauty, but she would not have changed the conversation for the finest compliment ever made to woman. For Arent had infectious enthusiasms.

He was good and great in his own sphere, and he made those who listened to him feel good and great. Unconsciously passionate and poetic, he had at once the beautiful humility and the splendid imaginations which belong to a truly romantic love. So though the Captain slept—or pretended to sleep—one whole hour, no one wished to awaken him. Certainly the Stamp Act was likely to be the tragedy of two countries, and the three young people were not unmindful, or uninterested in it; but a national tragedy is

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never so individually important, or so interesting, as the private melodrama of our own daily life.

Fortunately, before the subject lost a particle of its romance, it was changed by the advent of Lieutenant Artaveldt. He came riding down the Broadway like a prince of maiden dreams; a soldierly cavalier on a great black horse, whose trappings shone with silver. He was handsomely dressed in an English riding suit of broadcloth, and he wore a silver-hilted sword and a little cocked beaver, which he tucked under his arm when he had dismounted at the Van Vroom gate. In his six feet of splendid manhood, there was not one ounce of superfluous flesh; for Nature, intending him for a man of war, had stripped him for the conflict, tightened every muscle and nerve, and sent the crimson blood in full tides through manifest arteries. Sun and wind and exposure of all kinds had bronzed and colored his face, which was lean and sharp, but tremulous withal, just as a fine blade is tremulous.

He came forward with the slight swagger which is the manner some really modest men assume when women are watching them. Bareheaded, his sword tilted with masterful grace and impudence, his steps ringing on the stone path with military precision, he advanced with a prideful confidence he had fairly won.

For while only a lad of twenty years old he had marched with that victorious band who under Colonel Peter Schuyler entered Montreal when that city surrendered in 1760; and three years later had been one of the gallant five thousand who on the plains of Abraham ended forever the long French war, and gave Canada to England. For to go to the army had seemed as natural to him as to go to school, and no one who looked at George Artaveldt could for a moment doubt that he was destined for the tremendous pilgrimage of the sword.

Arent, also, had been no mean fighter, but the evidences in his case were secondary; his great conflicts with the elemental forces of nature being immensely dominant over those made equal by their human limitations. So Arent was the incarnation of the sea—of its illimitable spaces, and its impenetrable mysteries; while Artaveldt bore on every lineament the red sign manual of the battlefield. Lady Rose was quick to see the difference.

"They are two as fine men as I shall ever meet," she thought, "but they are not of a piece; the sailor is the finer of the two—but in faith I am almost distracted between them!"

Very soon after Artaveldt's arrival, the talk and laughter in the front garden arrested the attention of the Captain. He sat up wide awake and looked at the Madame, who was knitting not far away, the nap-napping of her needles making a pretty accompaniment to the twittering of the birds in the vines.

"Katrina," he said, "that talking and laughing in the front of the house, what means it?"

"It means that the children are happy. Twice I have heard Arent laugh—so merry as a little boy he laughed. That is good."

"And pretty soon, now, Madame Von Block comes driving this way; no more she makes of women's good names than a mower makes of the grass. Thou speak to them."

Then Madame rose, and going through the wide hall of the house, she stood at the open front door and called Virginia.

"Thy father is afraid of Anita Von Block's tongue," she said, "and there is a damp wind blowing from the river. Come into the house, and mind this, Virginia: if father will talk of the King, and the tax, and the meeting last night, ask Joris Artaveldt to tell the story. In a few words he

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will tell it." And Virginia smiled and nodded her handsome head.

"I will ask Joris," she answered.

The cold wind from the river had touched the Captain also. Madame found him in his chair by the fireside directing the making of the fire. "Like the firing of a gun the wind came down from the north," he said. "Are the children coming in?"

Arent and Rose entered as he spoke, and in a few minutes Virginia and Artaveldt followed. The Captain looked at them suspiciously. Virginia had some yellow crocus twined with ivy upon her breast, and the jealous father told himself they had not been placed there without some foolish words. He knew it from the dreamy look in Virginia's eyes, and from the light on Artaveldt's face; for the light which falls on the face of a man, from the face of a woman that loves him, can never be mistaken for any other light. Ah! but there should be another name, blessed and beautiful, for this soul illumination, seen only on the faces of the loving and the beloved!

Rose had lifted her tatting, and Arent sat at her side. Virginia went aimlessly to her work basket, she was not thinking of hemstitching. Artaveldt—rather to the Captain's annoyance—insisted on holding the hot coal to his freshly filled pipe. Madame's fingers were busy with her knitting needles, but her eyes were taking note of every one, and every thing. She was anxious for somebody to begin a sensible conversation. She looked at Arent, but Arent was talking to Rose in a low voice, and Rose was laughing softly and answering him with glances from her beautiful eyes. Virginia was lost in reverie, and every moment the Captain was more likely to revert to the morning's interrupted conversation.

Suddenly Artaveldt interposed. He dropped the hot coal,

placed the tongs in their stand, and lifting himself erect, said in a tone of pleasant exaltation—

"We are going to have a race on our course next Monday. Captain, my father desires your presence;" and then with a bow to Madame—"I trust the ladies and Arent will also honor us so far."

There was instantly a great excitement, for a race of any kind, even at that early date, was irresistible to a New Yorker. Not only had the colonists all the hippic enthusiasms of the mother country; they also had an ardor for betting that knew no bounds. So Ardaveldt was beset with eager inquiries. What horses were to run? Who was to ride them? Would there be a large company? and the stakes, were they worth while, or merely honorable and nominal?

During these and other questions Artaveldt stood on the hearth, the center of interest, his face beaming, his eyes flashing delight, his hands restlessly emphasizing all he said—

"My father's new mare, *Corisande*," he answered, "is to be matched against a horse General Wingate has just brought from Kentucky."

"Who will ride Wingate's horse?" asked the Captain.

"Jack Carpenter. He is a jockey in ten thousand. If thirty horses were in a race, he could tell with one of his Parthian glances what they were all doing."

"He could not. I do not believe such tales. But Wingate knows a good horse, and a good jockey; a great turf-man is Wingate."

"My father says he is to be made one of the King's Council in New York."

"So? Well, he is good for nothing else."

"And who rides *Corisande*?" asked Madame.

"I intend to ride her myself."

Rose looked at the amateur jockey with approval, and

cried "Bravo!" Virginia gave him one bright glance, but did not speak. The Captain laughed with good humor. "I like your spirit, Joris," he said, "but you will be beat."

"I think not. The Kentucky horse has tremendous speed, but no innate gameness."

"And what of *Corisande*?"

"Unless it is myself, no one yet knows her mouth's secret. But I think I understand both her mouth and her temper. I have always been on the side of victory. I do not intend to be beat."

"So! That is good. But you will find the racecourse and the battlefield different. I am not against a good race fairly run and fairly won, but God save us from the battlefield."

"Indeed, Captain, at the meeting last night you were plainly for the battlefield."

"I, Joris, for the battlefield?"

"Yes, sir, and you spoke of it with a great heart; for when De Lancey said, 'such sentiments as John Cruger and William Bayard advocated would bring on rebellion and civil war,' you answered, 'De Lancey, we expect nothing but war; but if war, victory.' Upon the honor of a soldier, sir, I would then have followed you to any battlefield."

The Captain looked confused, and Madame, rubbing the end of her nose with an air of scorn, leaned forward and shook a forefinger impressively at him—"I told thee, Jan, to keep quiet," she said, "and it seems thy 'few words' were for war. I am ashamed of thee."

"Indeed, Madame," cried Joris, "you would have been exceedingly proud if you had heard Captain Van Vroom speak. It was only a few words each time, but they were such words as made men think great thoughts, and feel their manhood. In this way it came about," he continued; "we were sitting at the long tables of the Exchange Hall, and

the floor space between them was crowded with standing men. De Lancey rose to answer some statement made by Mr. Low, and he said 'the Stamp Act imposed by the House of Commons was a just tax, and it did not ask us to contribute a penny to the navy that protected our coasts, nor yet a penny to the interest of the English debt. Whatever money it collected in America was to be spent in America, spent in paying one-third of the expense necessary to support an army for our own defense. Was this tyranny, was this injustice?' he asked. 'On the contrary,' he declared, 'England had been too indulgent, too forbearing with our unreasonable demands and complaints; we were froward, disobedient children, who deserved from the administration vigorous, yes, even rigorous, measures.'"

"Well, then, Joris, tell us what Rutgers said to this reproof," and the Captain evidently recalled Mr. Rutgers' interruption with delight.

Joris also laughed as he imitated the passionate amendment of the vituperative Rutgers, slowly spitting out the words, with the same black frown and scornful hatred:

"'Why stop at vigorous, or even rigorous, measures?' he asked. 'Why not advise *les dragonades*, and then the shameful tax could be collected by the soldiers the administration has forced into our homes—damn them!'

"De Lancey was scornfully silent, and Mr. Low said, 'The Commons in America had, and always had had, the constitutional right to grant their own money, otherwise we should be slaves; in short——' and then there was great confusion, and many speaking at once, until up rose our Captain, and his voice was like the voice of a man used to commanding the winds and the waves. Every one was still in a moment and through the hall and through every heart in it rang the Captain's words—'De Lancey, the English House of Commons does not represent us, there-

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fore it can not lawfully tax us, and illegal taxes we will not pay—no, not a copper farthing of them!”

“Good, my fader,” said Arent. “Go on, Joris.”

“‘It is dog-mean for the colonists to grudge payment for their own protection, dog-mean!’ answered De Lancey. ‘Great Britain protects America, and America is honorably bound to be obedient to Great Britain.’

“‘We don’t need Great Britain to protect us,’ was the quick answer. ‘We have three hundred thousand white men in our colonies between the ages of sixteen and sixty. During the recent war we supported twenty-five thousand soldiers for England, and spent many millions of money. Heavy taxes among ourselves we have paid, both for military and civil establishments. Nothing at all for forts, garrisons, or armies to keep us in subjection have we cost England. By a little ink and paper we have been ruled. Why, then, are English soldiers billeted in our homes? We don’t need them. Our militia is sufficient. The fight is within every man of us. To coerce, not to defend us, they sit at our firesides. Let them try it!’

“‘Do we owe England nothing, then? Are we to have all the favors we receive from her without payment? The idea is indecent and dishonest, Van Vroom!’

“‘We do pay, De Lancey, and pay well. The profits of England from the colonies is no less than two millions of pounds a year.’

“‘Then, sir, in the name of common sense what is all your grumbling for?’ retorted De Lancey. ‘The Stamp Duty is worth only one hundred thousand pounds annually. England is losing a million pounds a year by it.’

“Then,” said Joris, “you should have seen our Captain’s face. It burned and glowed with anger, and he struck the table a blow with his hand as he answered—‘De Lancey, you are thinking of pounds and profits; the men who are

against the Stamp Act are thinking of Liberty, and Honor, and Justice, and Self-Respect! How many millions of pounds are they worth to the City of New York and her burghers? It is not the gold! *Sacrament!* No, it is not the gold. That we have not counted. It is the principle.'

" 'The principle!' sneered De Lancey. 'That is a new motive, most unexpected. Do you know what it means, Van Vroom?'

" 'In this case, De Lancey, it means no robbery. We will not suffer that men in England vote our money away from us without our consent or knowledge. If to rob a citizen is a crime, a far greater crime it is to rob a nation. If England will commit that crime, what the devil next?'

" 'Then, after all, your principle means money. I thought so!' and De Lancey spoke with a laughing contempt, and sat down.

" 'It means,' cried our Captain, 'that no one can tax us lawfully except ourselves, or our representatives. At the root of all national freedom lies this law. If out of our right England takes it, she may as well take all the rest with it. With tooth and nail, through thick and thin, through life and death, for this principle I will stand!' And most of the men sitting rose to their feet with a shout, and Joris Artaveldt rose with them."

So with flashing eyes and arms flung outward Joris spoke, and his passion of patriotism touched those listening with the same spirit. Madame leaned forward and took her husband's hand.

"Thy words were great words, Jan," she said, "and I am glad that thou had thy say." And Jan laughed and patted his wife's cheek, and Katrina never once raised her eyes to the clock, though it was striking four. During this little interlude, Joris also was receiving compensations. Virginia's beaming glance of approval, Rose's evident ad-

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miration, Arent's enthusiasm, Madame's smile, were all sweet and welcome; and with increased spirit he continued his narration—

"After the Captain's speech, Judge Jones arose. He told us we were all at sixes and sevens in this matter, and knew nothing of what we were talking about. But, he said, without inquiry as to the right or wrong of it, we had better remember that what England wills, she wills; and that we must either bend or break to that will.

"For a moment there was a dead silence; then, from the crowd on the floor, Tobit Levi stepped forth. His old eyes shone like fire, and he stroked his long white beard, and looked like the seer his people say he is. His voice was low, but clear and deliberate, and it went through the crowd like the voice of the wind; all alike heard and felt its whispering power, and the words they heard were these—

" 'Nevertheless, we will carry our will through England's teeth, great as she is. I have seen it. This thing I know!' He disappeared among the crowd as soon as he had spoken, and for a few moments a solemn feeling stilled the meeting.

"Mr. Low then called on the merchants present who were willing to resist the Stamp Tax to extremities, to sign their names; and De Lancey rose and advised all true and loyal men to depart—'it is an overt act of treason and rebellion,' he said, 'and we will not witness it.' So, accompanied by Elder Semple, Judge Jones, my father, and about a dozen others, they left the hall. At the open door the Elder turned and said angrily—

" 'Sign awa', neighbors, sign awa' your loyalty, and your property, and your lives. You'll save a threepenny stamp ye ken, and you'll be like to have a threepenny war on your hands that will be mair than you can manage. I scorn such a dirty lot o' rebels, egad!'

" 'Keep your tongue, Semple,' growled Rutgers, turning

a black, scowling face on the Scotchman. 'You may be loyal now to the German Geordies, but you were a rebel officer at Culloden, with a hungry, dirty lot of ragged Scotch rebels around you, egad!'"

This incident seemed virtually to have closed the meeting, but conversation on the subject was too interesting to be dropped at once. It turned to the race at the Artavelde course, to the lottery, to the proposal for a new theater, but like the stray shots after a fight, there was a constant return to the Stamp Act. Then the clock struck five, and Madame put down her knitting, and Joris said he must go home. Arent went to the stable with him to get his horse. Captain Jansen lit his pipe and followed them, and over Virginia and Rose there fell a spell of silence. It was broken by a surprise; a servant entered with a letter for Lady Rose Harley, and with a feeling of mingled expectation and annoyance, she opened it.

"It is not a love letter, Virginia," she said; "it is something more interesting and unusual. My box of new fineries has arrived, and Mrs. Colden had sent the carriage for me. Alas! I shall have to leave both my idolatries. I wonder if the taffetas and lace will make me as happy."

"But you will not go to-night, Rose?"

"At once, it seems. They are at the fort, both the Coldens and the fineries. In an hour I shall know what the new customs and the writs of assistance have left me."

"But the race on Monday?"

"I shall see you before Monday. I must now hasten, for Mrs. Colden says they will wait tea for me."

However, she contrived to linger long enough to bewilder Arent with her hurry of regrets, her bright smiles, the dewy look of tears in her fine eyes, and the soft clasp of her hand.

"Sweet Virginia, think of me constantly," she whispered.

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"I shall be inconsolable till I come here again," and she gave Arent, in one kind, sorrowful glance, a portion of such consolation as the assurance afforded.

Poor Arent! The parting was too sudden, too unexpected to be borne. "I have already lost my heart, I shall now lose my senses," he said, for in his reckless misery he forgot to choose his words.

"Indeed, sir," answered Rose, "you must be reasonable. There is always a middle way to be followed."

Then the carriage door was closed, the last word said, the last look exchanged, and Arent felt as if life had suddenly grown dark. All the ancient ecstasies of love and youth, and their special sorrows, overflowed his heart. He took Virginia's hand and was speechless. The Stamp Act, with all its wrong and possible calamities, passed out of his mind. He could think only of Rose, of the sit of her head, the curl of her lip, the light of her eyes, the music of her speech, her sweetness so finely mixed with pride. She was not compounded as the other women of virtues and frailties, of loveliness and faults, she was purely perfect, an elemental thing, a vision, a voice out of the unfathomable abyss of life. Poor Arent!

CHAPTER THREE

THE STRAWBERRY HANDKERCHIEF

Two days after this parting Virginia was sitting alone by the window of the living room, carefully backstitching the little tucks in some cambric ruffles for her father's wrists. She had been singing, and the music of her song still lingered in her face. Everything about her was beautiful. For the embrasure of the window held upon its shelves potted pansies and hyacinth bells, and amid their enthralling perfume and loveliness, sewing and singing, Virginia sat, a sweet welcome wonder of womanly grace and beauty.

Her rippling brown hair was combed backward from her wide brow, and kept in place by a comb of that golden amber which looks like solid sunshine. Finely arched eyebrows of a darker shade than her hair, and long dark eyelashes emphasized the soulful gray eyes they guarded. Her face was perfect in shape and exquisitely tinted; her form tall, slender and graceful in every movement; and surely some innate, unreasoning sense of fitness had made her select the dress which so charmingly clothed her. It was an Indian chintz of palest sea-green shade, over which was scattered white lotus flowers. It was laced across her bosom with narrow green ribbon over a white stomacher of Decca embroidery, the elbow sleeves being finished with ruffles of the same rich needlework. And the whole simple costume was illumined by the radiant, long chain of amber beads, which after encircling her throat fell in a strand of dazzling sunshine to her white belt.

Such a costume would not tempt the beauty of 1908, but

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the beauty of 1765 was well pleased with its foreign air and its distinct contrasts; and the passionate and impressable Joris Artaveldt thought it enchanting when he saw it on the girl he adored. In his eyes Virginia that afternoon lacked nothing of perfection. The mystical land of India and the homeland of the Zuyder Zee were blended with her youth and loveliness, and the romance of the lotus and the amber touched his imagination, though he was not consciously aware of it. He had come in unexpectedly, and he thanked his good fortune that at last he had found Virginia alone.

"My father and mother," she said, "are gone to short-evening with the Beekmans. Their daughter Maria has come to visit them; it is her first visit since her marriage—she lives now in Kingston—every one who was at her wedding will call upon her—we are friends with the Beekmans—long friends."

She was full of happy confusion; she was talking, but hardly aware of what she said, and Joris was not listening to her words. All his soul was in his eyes, and she felt their influence and was trying to talk against it. Of course she failed. A sudden silence, a tremulous look of inquiry, and Joris was on his knees at her side.

"Virginia, you dear one! You soul of my soul!" and he clasped her hands as he spoke, and kissed them reverently.

"I love you, sweet! Oh, how I love you! You know it, you must have seen, you could not help feeling it. Speak to me one word—just one little word, Virginia!"

She looked troubled, yet there was a soft light in her eyes no one had ever before seen. But she withdrew her hands from his clasp, and said gently—

"Joris, rise. Not while you kneel will I listen to you. That is wrong. Sit by my side. We are equals."

Then he drew a chair close to her, he clasped her hand

in his own, and his arm was ready to embrace her. But though she felt his near presence like a new life, she could not admit any previous knowledge of his affection. The idea of love was as yet on the horizon of her thoughts, her heart a virgin wilderness, little known even to herself. If Love had ventured into its mysterious outskirts, his presence had not been consciously revealed. In the society of Joris she had indeed been sensitive to those vague impressions through which one soul enters into relations with another soul; but these elusive experiences had only been entertained in the realm of reverie, where they had naturally resolved themselves into a dreamy somnambulism. But when Joris converted his love into words and actions, all that was indefinite and dubious was dispelled by the innate, unequivocal ardor of his wooing.

At first the passionate impetuosity of his entreaties astonished, perhaps frightened her a little. She could hardly believe that she was loved "as the light of his eyes," that his "very dreams were hers," and he "constantly longed for her, hoped for her, delighted in the very thought of her." But as he pleaded, he drew her closer to him, his arm embraced, his cheek almost touched hers, and then the tide of a woman's love suddenly overflowed her heart. She raised his eyes one instant, and in that instant the soul of Joris sought and found her soul; their bodies leaned to each other in visible beauty and affection, and so it came, the little word that makes all fast, and the long, long kiss.

For a few moments Joris and Virginia did not speak. Love's wordless presence was perfect companionship. It burned like an ethereal lamp in their soul-illuminated eyes, and all that was sweet and true shone in them; no cloud, no shadow, only a glow of soft, dark fire. It gave to the lily-like pallor of Virginia's skin a lovely blush; to her red lips a radiant smile, to her tall, slim figure a new grace.

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Her voice held a caress in its tones, and her low, musical laugh threw a splendor over all her charms. Joris had not dreamed she was so beautiful.

He gazed at her with wonder, quite unconscious that his own physical attractions had been greatly enhanced by that all-overish grace which comes with the domination of the spirit over mere flesh and muscle. Indeed it was to the fiery radiations of his love's interior transfiguration Virginia had yielded her own love; for, armed by his transcendent passion, she had found his pleading keen as his sword and more persuasive than his beauty. For a true lover is more than a lover; he has that divinity of look and touch which makes of the beloved one an unquestioning worshiper.

Just one hour of supreme joy followed this revelation of affection—an hour in which the lovers, dwelling in Paradise, remembered neither the past nor the future. So much grace of love was given them that they refused to shadow those heavenly moments with any fear or care for consequences, although both knew that such considerations must come.

It was Arent that brought the restless flavor of daily life into their elysium. As the clock struck five he entered, and Virginia rose hastily to order the belated meal. Arent's face was troubled, and the gay sailor youth had the weary air of an anxious landsman beset with business cares and debts and duns.

"Thou, Joris?" he said. "I am glad to see thee."

"What news have you, Arent?"

"Ill news only. All day long I have been in the midst of bickerings. In every one's mind there is confusion; in every one's pocket the same. Into harbor come two ships from London to-day, and the merchants will not receive their cargoes until they know whether that Stamp Act robbery becomes law or not. My own cargo, in part, must re-

main also on the *Manhattan*. At a standstill is business of all kinds; the quays and docks are full of idle men; the stores are empty, and the merchants standing on the sidewalk angrily discussing or quarreling about the situation. The blue sky, and the sunshine, and a little wind among the trees above such unhappiness seemed a mockery. I wish myself out at sea; there is no Stamp Act there."

"There are storms at sea, Arent."

"A blustering wind can be managed, but a crowd of blustering men are beyond reasoning with. The Governor was snarling right and left, and getting more snubs than fair words. I pity the poor man. What about your race, Joris?"

"The race will come off; every one will be glad of it. A battle in prospect might interfere—nothing less would."

"And will you really ride *Corisande*?"

"No, my father objects. Jerry Laycock will ride her."

"That little monkey I saw exercising her yesterday?"

"The same."

"But he is a child, only a child; you can not trust him."

"Can't I? Jerry is the best rider in New York. A little monkey, I grant you that, but he is sib with any horse he sees. *Corisande* adores him. She will not rest at nights unless he is in the next box. Most horses want company, but they are generally satisfied with a cat or a dog; *Corisande* will have nothing, and no one but Jerry. When she is lonely she taps the dividing board of the stalls with her hoof, and Jerry goes to her. What they talk about is their secret, but it seems to interest both. If Jerry tells *Corisande* to win, she will win, or she will drop dead trying to do it. Come and see her win, Arent."

"Yes, unless there is a battle on hand."

Virginia was making tea as Arent made this promise, and the young men joined her at the table. "Will Lady Rose

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be at the race, Virginia? Have you seen her here to-day?" asked Arent.

"Since she left us, Arent, I have not seen her. It is strange. I suppose the Coldens object to her coming through the restless streets, but she is sure to be at the races—the Coldens also; no one misses a race."

Then Arent was silent. The quiet sense of a lost hope subdued him. He did not even notice or suspect the love drama enacting at his side. All day he had cherished the idea that he would find Rose with Virginia, and his disappointment was great. He could not rise above it, and he complained of being worried about business matters.

"I wish that my father would come home," he said petulantly; "how can a man go visiting and card-playing when there is so much at stake? I wonder me at father."

"He will return very early," answered Virginia; and then she looked from the clock to Joris, and the young lover understood that he was to go away. But Virginia walked through the garden with him, and at the gate the sweet trouble of parting delayed them so long that Arent finally came to the door and called his sister.

"A wearisome good-night you gave Joris," he said. "I want to talk to you about Rose. Oh, Virginia, I love her so much! Does she care for me? Tell me what you think—the truth tell me, for uncertainty is limbo. Yes, or no. Say that."

"She thinks you very handsome, very good and clever; does love come that way?"

"Has she any lovers in England? You must know; girls tell each other such things."

"She never spoke of any; but Arent, dear Arent, she belongs to the nobility. Her aunt is a duchess—how can you hope to win her?"

"What then has nobility to do with love? Love makes

all lovers equal. Love is straight as a little child. I love you, and you love me,' that is what she would say, and she would not think of nobility, or of her aunt the duchess, no indeed!"

"But if you loved her, and she loved some one else, Arent?"

"I for her, and she for another! Oh, Virginia, mad love, mad love, that would be!"

He looked utterly wretched, and Virginia could not bear the despairing tone in his voice. Besides, on that blessed night she was herself too happy to believe in loss or disappointment. From her own store of hope and joy she gave lavishly to her brother. She lifted him out of doubt and despair, and promised him his heart's desire, if he was only courageous and truthful. For all this is in the power of a good sister. Her love is the true, true love, the healing love, the comforting love. And Arent kissed her thankfully, and went into the garden with the light of hope in his eyes, and the melody of a tender love song on his lips—

"'I would approach, but dare not move;
Tell me, my heart, if this be love?'"

A few minutes afterwards the Captain and his wife returned home. It had been but a poor merrymaking at Beekmans—"the men were full of anxiety," said the Captain.

"They were cross and ill-tempered as they could be," corrected Madame. "Every one of them was ready with a new complaint. Discontented creatures! I say that plainly."

"Well, then, men of the English race are always black angry when they are looking forward to trouble, and only deadly fight can make them cheerful again. There it is!"

"So? I thank God, then, I have a Dutch husband, who

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can hope for the best till the worst comes; and then make the best of the worst."

"Joris Artaveldt was here," said Virginia, "and he thinks we shall have some war."

"Men think as they wish," answered the Captain. "Young Artaveldt enjoys tossing the sheath from his sword."

"Oh, father!"

"And if he does," answered Madame, "he is no worse than the rest. With men, war is always popular. They like to dress up, and think they are heroes because on some battlefield they have acted like the wild beasts. *O weel!* when men are tired of easy days, they will fight. Nothing will help."

"Joris will fight for a good cause, mother; he will not fight without one. He is brave, and wise also. Now I will go to bed. I like not this constant talk of war and quarreling. It is not good."

"Well, then, nothing but worry have we brought home. Keep it out of thine own room, dear one. Sleep well!"

It was a large room facing the river. The windows were open, and as it was lilac-tide the perfume of these lovely Persian exiles filled it. She put out her candle, for the full moon in the cloudless heaven shed over the sweet place an ethereal light. Then she went to an open window and stood looking into the sleeping garden. A border of white flowers threaded it like a dream. The sigh of the wind in the trees, the murmur of the river, the heartbeat of the spring, responded to all the mysterious enchantments of her own youth and love. And as she mused on the new happiness that had come to her, she could hear her soul singing within her—then she sank upon her knees, and lifted her joyful face heavenward in adoration of that dear God whose name is Love, and who

. . . though vast and strange,
When with intellect we gaze,
Close to the heart steals in,
In a thousand tender ways.

For God is love to such women, and the angels put their arms around them.

Into this chamber of peace, with its open look over garden and river, Rose Harley came very early one morning a few days after the engagement of Joris and Virginia. Indeed, it was so early that Virginia was still busy about its arrangements. Among its white draperies she stood, the vision of a pure soul clothed in the mystery and beauty of the flesh. In her hands there was one of those long, narrow bottles holding its precious hundred drops of attar of roses. It had strange golden characters on its flat sides, and she was wondering what they had to say. The pleasant speculation was in her bending face, and a faint, delicious odor encompassed her.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" cried Rose, as she entered the room in a flurry of silk and gauze and drooping ostrich plumes. "Oh, Virginia, it is the scent of heavenly roses, of roses gathered in Paradise! I am faint with their sweetness. Where did you get such perfection?"

"Captain De Vries brought me six vials of it from China. He said they came from Cashmere. I will give you one of them. Why have you not come earlier?"

"La! It is only nine o'clock, Virginia. I assure you that I have put the Coldens' house arrangements at sixes and sevens to get me here at this housemaid hour."

"Of the hour I was not thinking, Rose. It is five days since I saw you. Poor Arent has been counting the minutes!"

"How unprofitable!"

"He loves you so much, Rose."

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"Pshaw! Tell Arent to make himself easy. Love is a common calamity; better people than Arent and I have endured it."

"Do you really care for him? Ever so little do you care for him, Rose?"

"If I were asleep, I might dare to tell you how much."

"Oh, Rose!"

"I will make to you a little confession—among all the incense offered me, I like best the straight words of our dear handsome Arent."

"And if he saw you now, he would lose his heart over again. You are more beautiful than ever."

"It is the fine clothes, Virginia. Really, I am the same dark midget as before. Look at my high heels, they make me two inches taller; this purple silk, with its golden gauze trimmings, gives me a royal air; and this hat, with its scarlet poppies and plumes, suits my black hair better than anything—except perhaps a jeweled crown. Look at them, Virginia," and she danced into the middle of the room, and stood in the white place fluttering on her tiptoes, like some splendid tropical bird.

"You are as beautiful as a——"

"It is the dress. Lord, what would I give to be really as beautiful as men think I am! This morning, when I went out to my chair, the silly carrier fellows lost their heads. They could neither move nor speak, but stood gazing at me with open mouths, as if they had seen a vision. This is, however, but one of my gowns. Will it do for the race? Will it make a sensation? Will that pink of perfection, Joris Artaveldt, approve it? I am all wretchedness until he nods his head."

"And Arent?"

"I should be lovely to Arent in a linsey kirtle and a cotton neckerchief."

"What did the Coldens think of your dresses?"

"They have had fevers of admiration, and chills of envy. I have persuaded them to copy this costume, and one of blue crêpe. I told them they would look enchanting in them, and they swallowed my words like cream. Poor girls!"

"But why poor?"

"They are so little sought after. They have been reduced to relapsing into learning and philosophy and works of charity, and such virtuous accomplishments. You know what kind of men they attract, Virginia?"

"Will they be at the race?"

"With all their hearts they would like to be there, but his excellency rails at such folly. He scoffs at the men who are planning treason and rebellion and who at the same time are making bets on Artaveldt's pony."

Virginia laughed. "Pony?" she queried.

"That is what he called the lovely *Corisande*. I must not forget to tell Joris. Miss Colden kindly defended the New York men. She said, 'they are so many-sided, sir; and you are used to follow one subject straight to its close.'"

"Do you think one subject is Doctor Colden's way, Rose? I do not. Is he not supposed to be perfect in philosophy, science, diplomacy, music, theology, and what not?"

"He is absurdly perfect. I suppose he learned one of these things at a time, and followed it straight to its complete knowledge. At present he is studying rebellion, and let me tell you, he finds it a confounding subject. But really, Virginia, I long to talk of love and the dear frivolities a little. I am exhausted with conversations about virtue, and taste, the *beau monde*, and all that. Let us be natural, and selfish, and a little improper. I have not spoken about a young man for nearly a week. Is it forbidden to ask after the handsome Arent, and the fascinating Joris Artaveldt?"

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Or if I tell you about my new gowns, and coats, and palarenes, shall I be in danger of fire or sword?"

"Fire and sword! What do you mean, Rose?"

"The Governor told us very seriously that the people of Nineveh and Sodom doubtless dressed gorgeously, and made bets, and went to races, and got married, with the Persians and fire at their gates—the inference was that the New Yorkers will be doing the same things, when the implacable, conquering English bring fire and ruin to New York. Shall we give our minds to the young men or the new gowns?"

"The new gowns, by all means. If you have any finer than the one you are wearing, tell me about it."

"Ah! I had forgotten—I have brought one of the latest fribbles for your acceptance;" and she rose and lifted her bag, a trifle of satin to match her gown, wonderfully adorned with butterflies worked in small iridescent beads. "Look at this, Virginia," and she took out of it a small parcel carefully folded; but retaining it in her hand, said, "First of all, I must tell you how it came to be such a mad fashion as it is."

"I am glad there is a story about it. Is it something to wear?"

"Listen, and then you shall look. There is now in London a wonderful actor, whose name is Garrick, and he has set the city wild with a tragedy of Mr. Shakespeare's called 'Othello.' I never read it, have you?"

"No. I have heard of it, I think; the name seems familiar."

"That is true and strange. Shakespeare always seems familiar. I wonder how that should be."

"Ask Doctor Colden."

"Not for a thousand tragedies. I should never like Shakespeare again. Well, Virginia, in this play of Othello,

a handkerchief embroidered with strawberries is a love gift, and though it made a deal of trouble, all the lovers in London affected a Strawberry Handkerchief. Even in the very respectable court of the great George and Charlotte, the Strawberry Handkerchief was so evident that the King asked the reason for it. And the notion delighted his Majesty, and he gave Queen Charlotte a square of cobweb cambric wondrously wrought with strawberries. My Aunt Portman has sent me two made after the Queen's pattern, and I have brought you one of them. Now look at it."

Then Virginia unfastened the thin silver cord, and took from within the parcel a square of finest cambric. Round it was a wreath of small strawberry leaves, and in each corner, amid the leaves, a little bunch of ripe, red strawberries. "It is beyond comparison!" she cried; "it is most exquisite! What shall I do with it? How shall I wear it?"

"The gentlemen pass their handkerchiefs through the topmost button of their dress coats; the ladies wear them at their belt. My aunt tells me all London must be in love, for everybody wears a Strawberry Handkerchief. In fact, people fall in love in order to be in the fashion. Lord Ely gave his lady one, and she has quashed her divorce intentions. The Marquis of Warrendon gave the rich Miss Hastings one, and the next day he was wearing her favor; and people say that the lovely Lady Linley let hers fall at the feet of the Duke of Andover, and received it back with the offer of his hand and heart and dukedom. Indeed, the tales are numerous and romantic, and the Strawberry Handkerchief is a most convincing proof of the naturally affectionate disposition of the English people."

"And will the fashion stand?"

"As the King follows it, the fashion will last as long as the very ugly but exceedingly good queen wears his

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token. One of her virtues is constancy—the handkerchief has prospects.”

“What will you do with yours? Will you wear it, Rose?”

“No. I cannot marry my aunt, and you cannot marry the Lady Rose Harley. We must keep them in scent and seclusion until we find lovers on whom to bestow them. For my part, I may cast the handkerchief at the feet of Arent—or Joris.”

Then Virginia suddenly rose, and going to a cabinet locked her treasure within it. She was troubled by the mention of Joris, and uncertain as to what she ought to do. Over the refractory drawer that was so difficult to lock she lingered as long as possible, but when she returned to her seat she saw the suspicion and the question in Rose’s face—

“You ran away at the name of Joris; tell me why you did so? Tell me without disguise, Virginia.”

“I have promised to marry him.”

“Grammercy! A pretty account you give of yourself. You ought to have warned me long ago. Pray let me offer you my good wishes. I did not know—I did not suspect——”

“Dear Rose, I did not know myself until three days ago. I was astonished.”

“You ought not to have been. Pray let me tell you what an enchanting creature you are. Sure, our young soldier could not help his adoration.”

“Rose!”

“Oh, I will not spare your modesty. Chaste stars! What sweet words and kissing there must have been. It confounds me to see how easily girls learn love. Oh, I am ashamed for myself as well as others. I am in the like transgression.”

“Indeed, dear Rose, I——”

"I will spare your confessions, Virginia. With all my soul I am glad for you. And it is a mercy that I am not the least in love with Joris Artaveldt. I never found him comparable to Arent. It is strange, but I have always had the good fortune, in every company, to pick out the best of the beaus for myself—make me thankful for so much intelligence. Lord! what would I give to be engaged—I mean a month, a week, a day, just to learn how it feels. It makes a change. I saw, rather I felt it in you at once, Virginia."

"Why do you not get engaged? You have a dozen lovers waiting on you. There is young Maryn Keyser——"

"I would not trust him unless he was key-cold dead."

"Captain Godschalls?"

"He is like a baby's whistle, any one can play on him?"

"Harry Percival?"

"He is a gambler beyond all intelligence. He casts the dice for every event. He would forget his wedding day unless he had a bet on it. I would not touch his hand, he shakes his elbow too constantly."

"The young curate of Trinity then?"

"He is an angel. But he is always talking about his flock. He might regard me as one of his sheep. Do I look like an amiable sheep delighting to follow and obey the shepherd? No, Virginia, I could not behave properly in a flock. I should lead it into mischief."

"Captain Reginald Beauchamp?"

"He fricassees everything he says with French and Italian. I do not understand him. Faith, he might give me orders in French, or scold me in Italian, and I could not talk back. In my own language, I can speak for myself, but I will take no chances with a man possessed of three languages; it wouldn't be a fair wrangle at all."

"Arent? I am sure you like Arent."

"Perhaps I do, perhaps I don't; perhaps 'tis time enough

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yet for me; but for all that, and all that, I swear we won't marry. I tell you soberly, I will not think of marriage until I am my own mistress."

"Then in a year?"

"I may make a fool of myself—if it is so written. Let us talk of your marriage. Does the path of true love run straight for you? What do the fathers say?"

"We have told no one. We thought it the best way at present."

"Yet you may take my word for it, this way will end in some lively scrapes. And pray do you think every one will be as blind as you wish them to be?"

"They might. You never suspected Joris of being in love with me."

"Let me tell you, Virginia, that people are not always asleep when their eyes are shut. It sometimes happens that I shut my eyes that I may see. Come, let us talk about our gowns, and coats, and hats, for of all the cant that is canted in this canting world, lovers' opinions and lovers' vows are the silliest."

"I am almost sure that you yourself are in love, Rose, and I count it much to your credit."

"Well, while I have meat and drink, love will not starve me; and I do wish it was dinner time. I am mortally hungry, and if there should happen to be a damson roll on the table, all the lovers in the world would be out of my reckoning. What are you going to wear this afternoon? I hope you will not outshine me—you need not, you have made your market now."

"Rose! Rose! About lovers do not speak in that common, coarse way. Market sounds like money, and with love and marriage, money has nothing to do."

"Faith, I am glad to hear it."

"Love makes marriage."

"Love may do a little, money does everything."

"Only for three days we have been lovers. There has been no time to think of——"

"Fathers?"

"Of money."

"My dear Virginia, if wisdom ever went with love I should pause and wonder. I asked about your dress, if you can remember so slight a thing."

"Joris wishes me to wear my light-blue frock. I have retrimmed it with silver lace and buttons. I shall neither disgrace nor outshine you, Rose."

Then the conversation settled itself on gowns and millinery, and seeing that the fashion of these things is now one hundred and fifty years out of style and date, we need not take thought about them. The men of those days railed and grumbled at the hoops, and the hair dressing, and the general extravagance, just as they rail and grumble to-day, and then with equal ardor and facility, put their hearts and fortunes under the feet of the over-dressed beauty. It was a subject of such adequate interest as put love out of hearing, and they were in the midst of a satisfying discussion on long sacques, and bell hoops, when they were called to dinner.

Rose went down with all her charms about her. She had removed her plumed hat, but a comb set with brilliants circled her black hair, and flashed a thousand darts into the senses of those who looked at her. The Captain met her with outspoken words of admiration. Arent was dumb with wonder and delight until a glance from Virginia restored him to himself. He was in his handsomest uniform and ready for the race course.

"The town has forgotten the Stamp Act," he said.

"Rich and poor are making bets, and talking of Justice Artaveldt's *Corisande*. It is not the tyranny of England

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that amazes the streets this morning; it is the presumption of the Kentuckian."

"Well then, Arent, he has a fine horse. I have seen the animal," said the Captain.

"I also have seen him. His jockey was parading him on Broadway this morning—a short, strong-limbed creature. Billy Burt said, in a tremendous pace he would stay well, but Case Van Brunt contradicted him. He would not bet a dollar on his staying. He thought if not ridden to his liking he would shut up at the turn. As we were talking Joris Artaveldt joined us, and the mare *Corisande* stepped daintily past. That little monkey Jerry Laycock led her, and I went with Joris to speak to him. All that Joris said was, 'Jerry, remember what I tell you, let her do as she likes with her head.'"

"A great crowd they will bring together, no doubt of that," said Madame. "But, Jan, it is only to please thee that I shall be one of them. At my wheel I would rather sit all afternoon. In the city there is so much trouble. I wonder me that sensible men can care about a horse race."

"But, mother, this Kentuckian says their horses are better than the New York horses. We can not pass that opinion. We must show him that the horses of New York State are the best in the world."

"Then why in the name of wonder bring the matter to question?" asked Rose. "When perfection is allowed, it is folly to risk the reputation on the temper or legs of any horse."

"The city grows crazy," answered Madame. "Every one's heart is in their mouth with fear, and yet they must go to a horse race! I am against such foolish ways."

"It is the way of the world from the beginning," said Virginia. "This morning the Governor was speaking to Rose about it. He reminded her that Sodom and Nineveh

were racing, and betting, and feasting, and dressing, with fire and the sword at their gates. He might have gone back to the deluge also, only one family was wisely considerate in the face of that danger."

"Far-fetched were the Governor's examples," answered the Captain, "and it was very ungrateful in him to compare New York to Sodom and Nineveh. Very kind has New York been to Cadwallader Colden, and well he knows her citizens are honorable men, true men, good men, all of us; at least, most of us; there may be a few bad men, I——"

"Plenty to serve for examples, Captain, without going back thousands of years for them. I know a few myself;" and Rose laughed merrily, and touched Arent's hand, and then answered his adoring look with a smile so speaking that he comprehended instantly he must corroborate her statement.

"I, also," he added, "I also know bad men—many of them. But I thank God, all the women I know are angels of goodness and beauty!"

"Stuff and nonsense!" ejaculated Madame. "Plenty of women only middling to bad. I could name a few of them."

"Enough said, Katrina. We must make an early start, two o'clock at the latest."

"What for? Thou art not betting, that I am sure of;" and Jan rose in a fussy, hurrying way, but did not answer his wife's assertion.

"If the race was between boats, that indeed. Boats are different," continued Madame.

"That is the truth, Katrina. Boats *are* different. When you have the wheel in your hands, you are trusting yourself; when you bet on a horse, you are trusting somebody else. Get ready now, in twenty minutes the coach will be

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waiting, and I like not to wait; and none of us will like the crowd and the dust of it."

The crowd went with them to the Artavelde course, and they found another crowd already there. A large tent had been erected for the invited guests, and beautifully dressed men and women rested in its shade, or strolled over the green grass. Every one was betting, or taking bets, laughing, flirting, arguing. Merchants, traders, and mechanics stood in groups conversing about the horses, with frequent side issues into politics. Jersey and Long Island farmers were sitting stolidly in their wagons; negro women selling cold chicken pie, or freshly fried crullers; and on the river there was a great number of small boats, gay with flags and finely dressed women, and pleasantly noisy with the sounds of conversation, laughter, music and singing. It was a happy scene, for it was both a race and a social reunion; and the atmosphere was full of the harmony of a humanity that believed itself to be making merry.

Suddenly a strange, restless feeling took possession of the outskirts of the course. Men gathered together, stood for a few moments, and then hastily left the field. Very soon Joris, with a face white and angry, passed rapidly along the line, and was seen speaking with passionate gestures to his father. At the same moment there came from the city a confused sound of bells and drums and human voices. A silence ominous and inquisitive stopped the talkers, even in the midst of their sentences, and as Joris said a word or two here and there, in the assembled company, men hurried away to their vehicles—their wives and daughters following in a kind of sullen, silent anger.

Captain Van Vroom was among the first to call his party together. "What is the matter, Jan? whatever is the matter?" asked Madame.

"Robbery! Tyranny! Slavery! That is all, Katrina;

not our lives—our lives we may keep, if like cowards and slaves we will live.”

“That Stamp Act again?”

“Yes—here is the carriage. Arent will drive you home. I am going with Fred Philipse to the Mayor’s office. When I shall get home I know not. Keep Arent by you—the soldiers may turn ugly.”

“And the race, father?”

“I care not, Arent, what is done about the race. More is at stake now than dollars and horse fame. The Lady Rose, your mother and sister take safely home, and suffer no impertinence from those red coats in the kitchen. If one rude word they say, rough them! Knock them down! Kick them out! God help us!”

“Come, Captain.”

“Ready, Philipse.”

Then Arent looked helplessly at his sister. He could not drive; he knew no more of driving than he did of ploughing; and charged with the care of the three women he loved best in the world, he feared to touch the reins. Virginia understood his dilemma. She whispered a few words to Rose, and Rose went to the young man.

“Captain Van Vroom,” she said, “pray let me drive. I want to drive so much. Oh, you need not fear to trust me, and you can sit at my side, and give me help, if I need it—which I shall not.”

So the drive which had turned Arent sick with apprehension was after all a happy drive. In spite of the public anxiety, it ended in smiles, and was followed by an evening that four young hearts never, never forgot. For Joris joined them at the tea table, though the news, he said, was “as bad as could be. There will be three mass meetings to-night,” he continued; “one at the Exchange Hall, one at Fraunce’s Tavern, and an open-air gathering round the City

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Hall. Sooner or later this quarrel will end in war;" and he uttered this decision with a proud solemnity, quite unconsciously touching the sword at his side.

But never yet was Love silenced by war, or rumor of war. His whisper is clearest and sweetest when drums beat and arms clash, and the loved one rides away to death or victory. Virginia drew closer to her lover, and tighter held his hand, as they sat together in the dim room speaking of things sorrowful and yet to come. For lovers desire this luxury of woe and sweet uncertainty. And no one that night interfered in their delicious confidences. Madame was passing in and out, but busily occupied with her household affairs and her compulsory guests. She thought the men were more impudent than usual, and more familiar with the slaves. She was afraid they were putting insubordination, perhaps even incendiarism, into their stupid minds. She was suspicious of every movement, fearful of every strange sound, anxious for her outspoken husband, and frightened lest Arent should be drawn into a quarrel that she could not help feeling was almost hopeless for the colonists.

Arent was walking with Rose in the starlit garden. She had thrown around her Virginia's red riding hood and cloak, and, clinging to the arm of the young sailor, was encouraging him, by the pretty ways love teaches all women, to tell her how beautiful she was, and how passionately he adored her. And in that still, scented place Arent found the eloquence that is of the inner and nobler man. He told his love in his own plain, childlike way—"I love you. You love me. I am yours. You are mine. Who or what shall part us?"

Nothing could be simpler, nothing more irresistible. She caught love from his bending face. His touch made her tremble with joy. His words went like wine to her heart. She surrendered herself to the sweetness of the hour. "It

is a taste of heaven! I will not refuse it!" So she thought, and so she drank of love's sharp, sweet wine until under the spell of its intoxication, she made she knew not what large promises for his sake.

At length she became alarmed at his influence over her, perhaps also a little weary; for she was not accustomed to encourage feeling that went much below the surface; so that when Virginia called her, she was cold and disillusioned by her own withdrawals. Arent was too happy to note any change; it was to Virginia she made her complaint—

"It is shameful!" she said, as she uncoiled her hair, and flung aside her splendid robe, "shameful! It is even cruel! Why are women made so susceptible to a man's arm, or the touch of his lips! I vow we are the most helpless of creatures. I have said things once to-night that I must unsay as long as I live. I wish I was ugly and fifty years old; yes, I vow I do."

"What have you said that vexes you so much?"

"Something to Arent. The words came by nature, and not by understanding, and so that happened in a moment that should not have happened in a hundred years. Women ought always to be protected; it is wicked to leave them alone with men. It is not fair. The creatures use some witchcraft; you are under a spell, you are not yourself; and when you come to yourself, you wonder what is the matter with you. Heaven grant me patience till I recover my senses!"

"Why did you go into the garden with Arent? You should have stayed with Joris and me."

"Virginia, if I had done so you would both have looked a thousand reproaches at me. Believe me, it was for your sake I went with Arent."

"Had you no other reason, Rose?"

"Sure, my dear. I wished to get rid of Joris. He was

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distractingly sentimental to-night, and I was afraid I might have to listen to some of his tringham-tramham poetry. Upon my honor, you are to blame for my indiscretion this evening."

"You are only talking, Rose."

"It is all I can do—at present. It is a bad, uncomfortable world, Virginia; nothing but tyranny, robbery, slavery, war, love, and such exasperations! In faith, a bad world, my dear."

"I wish it were better for your sake. It ought to be better."

"Oh, it does well enough. I don't really want it better. I like it as it is, not as it ought to be. Let us go to sleep. I am tired of the day and its indiscretions." She raised herself a little on her elbow, drew Virginia's face to her own, kissed it, and then with a sleepy sigh said—

"If you meet me in the land of dreams, be so polite as to forget Arent, and Joris, and the Stamp Act."

Virginia laughed and promised; and for at least ten minutes there was neither sound nor movement. Then Virginia said softly—

"Rose, are you asleep?"

"Very near so."

"I let Joris see the handkerchief."

"Yes?"

"He was delighted with it—I gave it to him."

"I am not in the least astonished. How will he wear it?"

"He said only over his heart."

"He is a *hum-m-m*. He will, on the contrary, fold it carefully in white paper, he will fasten the ends of the string with wax, and his own seal 'Joris.' Then he will write on the cover 'From dear Virginia,' and put below your name the year 1765, and the month of the year, and

the day of the month, and the hour of the day; finally, he will put it in his desk, or his top drawer, or wherever he keeps his love tokens. And in plain truth he will do the right thing."

"Rose?"

"The exactly right thing. One lonely lover in all New York, with a love gift over his heart, would be funny."

"Funny?"

"Yes. The King gave honor to the fribble in London. I wonder if it would be possible to induce Governor Colden to wear a Strawberry Handkerchief. I would cheerfully resign mine. What thrills! What romances! What delightful misunderstandings might follow! Mrs. Colden might become jealous!" and she snickered merrily into her pillow.

"I suppose your handkerchief is promised?"

"Who to?"

"Arent."

"Do you suppose so? Do you? I believe myself to have more intelligence."

"Arent would proudly wear it over his heart."

"Lord! I know it. He would wear it on his cap. He would make it into a love knot, and wear it at his throat. He would frame it, and glass it, and hang it for a picture in his cabin. Faith, I should like to give it to Arent, but I dare not."

"Then who will have it from you?"

"Chiefly my washerwoman. Kiss me, Virginia, and then for goodness sake let us bury this weary day in a long, deep sleep. Good-night!"

"Good-night, dear Rose."

CHAPTER FOUR

A HOUSE PARTY

THERE are hours in which the most trifling cross will assume the proportions of a calamity, and Madame Van Vroom was not ignorant of such occasions; but on this night of disappointment and anxiety she had substantial reasons for her fearful looking-forward into the future. Never before had she seen her good-natured husband so stern and determined in manner, and so reckless in speech; and what might come of two such dangerous weapons at this passionate hour, she was afraid to imagine.

She was also troubled about Arent. With pain and disapproval she had watched him walking with Rose in the garden, for she knew that however great his love for the beautiful girl it could never meet with any real encouragement and success. "Poor Arent!" she kept whispering to herself, "he will love away his very soul, and then in some cruel hour he will awaken, and he will cry out 'Moeder, it was all a dream!'" Nor was she quite easy about Virginia and Joris. Certainly she had no suspicion of their engagement. That event would be so completely outside of all the family plans and expectations, she could hardly imagine it as possible. Almost angrily she put the thought away, and yet Joris came so often, and Virginia always seemed to know he was coming, how was that? Besides, it was not Rose but Virginia that drew him to the house; he came quite as often when Rose was not with them.

These things were matter sufficient for anxious speculation, but they were attended by other small worries that added to her sense of trouble. The soldiers in the kitchen

were making merry over the passage of the Stamp Act, and the slaves, instead of spinning, were drinking and singing insulting songs with them; and she was afraid to interfere. When Arent came in from the garden she intended to ask him to do so, but at that time Arent was not wisely available. He was in an ecstasy of love, he was a glorified being for whom such creatures as quarreling slaves and drunken soldiers did not exist. She felt sure that in his exalted condition he would very likely let slip the rights he ought to enforce, or else—angry at being called from the heaven of love to a squabbling kitchen—enforce them to a dangerous degree. It was also evident that he was longing for solitude, and Madame had such a pang as only mothers can feel when she realized he was willing to leave her alone, in order that he might live over again with his own heart the looks, and words, and tender actions of the beloved one.

If she went to the door, which she was frequently impelled to do, the sounds from the city frightened her. The beating of drums, the ringing of bells, and the confused noise of human voices shouting, singing, quarreling, assailed her ears, while the atmosphere showed red and lowering with the rising and falling of flame. It was only the torches in the hands of men marching to rendezvous, or lighting up some place of meeting, and she suspected nothing worse; but it was unusual and unnatural, and helped to intensify the restless, uncertain feeling of the hour.

She did not expect the Captain until late, perhaps midnight, but he returned very early, and for once he acknowledged utter weariness. He threw off his coat with an air of temper, and had little of his first enthusiasm about him. Katrina knew better than to ask questions. She gave him his house jacket and slippers, and placed the Hollands on the table at his side. The little brass kettle was simmering

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on the hearth, and she mixed the homely spirit with her own hands as he was removing his shoes.

"Very tired art thou, dear one; drink then, it is for thy succor."

He succumbed at once to the gentle service, and as he lifted his head he smiled lovingly into her sympathetic face.

"I see also that thou art displeased. What has happened to grieve thee so much, dear Jan?"

"How can thou ask such a question? All the things that we feared have happened to us. Now it has come to this pass; the men of New York—I mean the good men, who love her—must fight for her."

"Fight! Oh, Jansen!"

"Well, then, we are traders, and we will fight with our own weapons. *Christus!* we will pinch England harder than she can pinch us. Into the Valley of the Shadow of Hard Times, shut up factories, angry and hungry men, without work and without bread, we will push her."

"A great thing you propose, Jan. God only knows how it can be done."

"Well, then, by God's help it will be done. At John Cruger's there was a large company discussing the matter quietly—our best merchants, lawyers, and the like, Katrina—and they have a plan which thou would call 'tit-for-tat,' but which I say plainly is a good plan."

"Not the sword, Jan?"

"It will cut deeper than the sword. See, here it is—if England will cripple our commerce and trade, we will shut up England's factories. Nothing that she makes will we buy; shoes, nor hats, nor nails, nor saws—nothing at all."

"What then, Jan? What shall we do?"

"Do without, or make what we want ourselves. No furs will we send to England, no beaver skins—especially tobacco."

"Ah, Jan, that will pinch them; a cross lot of men they will be without tobacco and snuff. I will even let myself pity their wives a little. They will draw their swords for their pipes, Jan."

Jan laughed, a strong, satisfactory laugh, then he added, "A few troubles and quarrels England will have at home, no doubt; pipeless men will find out very soon that the Stamp Act is not constitutional, and whatever is not constitutional in England is from the devil. In the mean time, we will make our own hats, and our own shoes, and coats, and kirtles, and petticoats. It is high time we did so."

"Many things will be very hard on us—many things we shall miss."

"But to be free, Katrina! To be free at all risks, and through all sufferings—that was the law laid on us by our fathers. We will never break it, we will never shirk it. *Vri Vriesen!* Free Frisons are the Van Vrooms! So I was born, so will I die!"

"If thou dies——"

"It is right. When a man dies fighting for freedom, he has not failed. No, indeed!"

"Did no one say a word for us in London, Jan? Where was Mr. Pitt? I thought he was surely our friend."

"We have friends in London, and we have enemies, and I think our worst enemy in London is Cadwallader Colden in New York. He is a whimpering, whining dog of a fellow, that is always taking occasion, and seeking occasion, and going out of his way to find occasion for complaining of us; and then, like the wolf in the fable book, he thanks God that he is not ferocious."

"You like not the Governor, Jan, that is easy seen."

"Who does like him?"

"Lady Rose says he is a good man in his own home."

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"That is nothing. That is loving himself. Judge Livingston says Colden treats both the judges and the assembly contemptuously, if they dare to differ from him. Mr. Watts called him to-day 'an old mischief-maker.' He said 'the poor body was hated by the people, who would prefer Beelzebub to him.' Yes, and he added that Colden would 'damn all America, if by doing so he could make himself appear great in the controversies now going on'; just because he has such an unbounded opinion of his own cleverness. Then Mr. Smith reminded us that Colden was thought to be an enemy to New York in Clinton's time; and 'tis a burning shame, Katrina, for much wealth and honor New York has given the cunning, stingy, little Scot with his decorums and his slavish little tricks. The spaniel of the world he is! Let him lick the King's hands or feet if he wants to. Eh, Katrina?"

"Such ingratitude, Jan, is——"

"Is the devil's own sin. It comes straight from hell. But one good friend we had in the house, a member called Barré. In our favor he said many grand words that before the end of May will ring in every home in America. Yes, Katrina, they will ring in the hearts of our children for ever and ever!"

"What mean you, Jan?"

"One hundred thousand copies, yes and more also, of that speech will be printed. Night and day, men will be printing it in all the big cities; and far and wide our young men will take it. From town to town, from village to village, from farm house to farm house, they will sow this seed of freedom. Squire Reid, who is a great farmer, Katrina, thinks it is the best way; 'scattering it ham-sam, broadcast, will not do,' he said; 'we must *drill* the whole country.' Well, Katrina, I have worked in my garden, and surely I know my peas and beans scattered broadcast would

do us little good; they must be sown in drills. Yes, indeed!"

"And pray, then, how are you going to do it? A great undertaking it will be."

"And a great company of young men have we ready for the work. Arent must get the *Manhattan* out of harbor quickly. All down the Atlantic coast he can sail. Many cities he can touch, and the cities can reach their out-lying villages. Barré's speech should be in the hands of every man, woman, and child. It is full of living words."

"Let me see it. Thou must have a copy."

"No, I have not. Every copy brought from London is in some printer's hands; but I heard it read by Jared Ingersoll's nephew, and I can tell thee a little about it. That ignoramus Townshend, who is at the head of American affairs, speaking in favor of the Stamp Act, said, 'we had been planted by England's care, and nourished by England's indulgence, and protected by England's arms.' Then Barré, who had been with Wolfe in Canada, and who knew America and Americans better than any one in the House, got to his feet in a passion. Ingersoll said his eyes flashed, and he stretched out his arms, and mocked at the English government's claim. He said we had been planted by England's oppression, that we had been given as a prey to her favorites, and that we had not only defended ourselves, but also helped England to defend herself. And then, Katrina, he told them to beware, because 'the Americans were *Sons of Liberty*, and very jealous of their freedom, and its rights.' And those three words, *Sons of Liberty*, throbbed in our hearts, and every man in the room rose to his feet. Without knowing it we rose, and some lifted their right hand, and some touched their swords, and I, Katrina, I found my right hand on my heart, and I felt the tears in my eyes, and

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John Watts cried out '*Sons of Liberty*'! and we answered him with a shout. For a few moments like gods we felt."

"I am glad for thee. Such moments salt a whole life, Jan."

"That is the truth. When we left Cruger's the people were shouting the three words up and down the streets. Turn which way you would, you heard them calling to one another, '*Sons of Liberty*'! and William Smith, whom we met in Maiden Lane, told us Isaac Sears, John Lamb, Marinus Willet, Mott Bancker and others were then and there forming a patriotic society to be called the '*Sons of Liberty*.' Arent must join it. Where then is Arent?"

"Very sensible is Arent; he is asleep in his bed."

"Sensible, I fear not. With the other men he ought to have been."

"He was with Lady Rose in the garden."

"A stop must be put to that foolishness. See thou to it."

"See to it thyself, Jan. To thy sons it is thy place to speak. Thy duty is not mine."

"Well, then, it is thy duty to speak some wise words to thy daughter. This afternoon I saw some carryings-on between her and Joris Artaveldt that I will not have. I like not that young man; he has such a cock-sure military insolence."

"He is a middling nice young man, as men go, Jansen; but I take no worry about Virginia and Joris. He has not had the secret to touch her heart."

"I wonder me at what Virginia sees in him. He has not got any good heart. Make it as easy as thou can for her, but also make her know that Joris Artaveldt is beyond all the possibles. For a son-in-law I will not have him. Never! Remind her that she is promised to Batavius De Vries, and Batavius she will marry, and that very soon."

I will not give bad fortune and Joris Artaveldt the scope of more opportunities."

"Prepare thyself for a disappointment. Virginia will not marry Batavius."

"By the angel Michael, I swear she shall marry him. In Boston he is now, next week he will be in New York. Very soon we settle that matter—in a wedding we will settle it."

"Whatever art thou thinking of? In such a way as that, my daughter can not be married. It would be shame and sorrow to both of us, and also there are no marriage clothes ready, and——"

"Very few clothes will do now. I tell thee it will soon be scandalous to have on a fine dress. Nothing English will be worn—only homespun and homemade for good men and women."

"That is to be seen. I believe it not. Women will give up many things, but their silks and satins and fine clothes will not be among them."

"Homespun is not amiss. I like it. Far more decent it is than the flimsy, rubbishly things Lady Rose wore to-day. I hated to see her with our Arent. A giddy, wandering temper she has; it would suit that cap-and-feather soldier, Joris Artaveldt, far better than our hard-at-work boy."

"See, now! Thou art making thyself in a passion for thy own fears only. Let the young people alone. Our best way is to do right, and let come what God sends. But, Jan, is it really true that we are to buy nothing at all English? And can a man of sense like Jansen Van Vroom believe that England will care whether we go to her market or not? It is a very trade-like way of making war, and I can not credit it as able to save New York."

"Let me tell thee, Katrina, Holland has remained Hol-

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land in spite of England and Spain and all her enemies, just because our forefathers had the true religion, and knew how to manage their business. The Lord never forsakes those who serve Him in the right way, and attend to their business. Well, then, New York is now attending to her business; she will turn it into a sword, and it will be a sharp one. Mind what I say, Katrina."

"Art thou turning Quaker?"

"Quaker? What art thou daring to say? I am no unbaptized, buttonless milksop. I think thou art falling asleep."

"It is like enough. I am tired; dog-tired."

"However could thou bear to compare thy Jan, who has used his cutlass on pirates and foreigners so often, to those holy, never-strike-back, sanctimonious——"

"Now, come, come, Jan, we don't care, do we, what means are used to carry our ends? Pipes, or purses, or swords, or cannon, it is all the same to us, if they kill the Stamp Act, eh? For my part, I do not believe England intends hurt to any of us; she is just poking the fire to make a blaze and frighten us a little."

"Never before have I heard thee talk such raving foolishness—give me another glass of Hollands. Frighten us indeed! We know nothing about fear. It is those sap-headed fools in London, with their desolating damnable system of raising money out of us, that may fear. We are fearless, sensible, just, and if England will let us, we are also prosperous. I tell thee, England has damned herself with this stamp business—another glass, Katrina."

"Not another drop. Go and sleep thy temper sweet, and then the time of smiles will come round once more."

"A man must do as his wife says, there is no help for it; but listen, Katrina," and he dropped his voice until it was barely audible—"Listen! Pretty soon now, we are

going to do the deed that has been the secret of our hearts these many years—we are going to strike for our freedom—we are going to be free—we are going to be kings over ourselves—but hush! hush! it is unlucky to talk of great things that are growing—growing—growing—till their hour strikes; dangerous, too, Katrina; against the King and the government, even in our bed chamber, we must not whisper; a little bird will carry the matter.”

“Jan, be silent. Thou art talking treason.”

“*Now* it is treason; but soon, Katrina, we shall call such words patriotism and Americanism. Yes, indeed;” and so muttering his hopes he fell asleep and dreamed of them.

In the morning early there was a message from Mrs. Colden. She said they were going to their country house at Flushing that day, and she wished Rose and Virginia to join them there. Virginia was reluctant to go. The journey to Flushing was disagreeable, and she had little sympathy with the Colden family. But social prestige was as powerful then as now—perhaps more so—and the Captain, though totally disapproving the Governor politically, was not opposed to his daughter mingling socially in a set regarded as the highest in the land. For Captain Van Vroom was a far richer man than people supposed him to be, and he had some distinct ambitions for his daughter. When he had married her discreetly, he intended to give her an establishment second to none in the colony; and it was therefore desirable for her to form friendships suitable to that distinction.

“I want thee to go to Flushing,” said the Captain, “then I can speak of the circumstance to some who will not care to hear of it—Alexander Semple, and Madame Van Heemskirk. Very proud would she be if her Joanna was asked, and a few others. ‘My wife is well, my daughter is spending a week at Governor Colden’s’—that will be pleasant

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for me to say when some people ask, 'How is your family, Captain?'"

"Yes, and I also wish thee to go, Virginia," said Madame. "So many girls would be proud of Mrs. Colden's invitation, and thy best thou must look, and thy best thou must wear. That India muslin Arent brought thee is none too good. There will be nothing like it there; even Rose has not a frock to compare with it."

"It is too fine, mother. If it is the white silk gauze woven with silver threads, you mean; it is only fit for a wedding gown."

"Art thou keeping it for thy wedding gown? I would not. Thy wedding gown will come with thy wedding. I think little of saving this, or that, for any event. Such savings are mostly no good; they prove too little, or too big; they are beyond the fashion, or behind it; the air has faded, or mildewed, or the moths eaten them. Wear thy fine frock when the occasion has come to thee, and let thy wedding dress take care of itself."

It was hardly possible for Virginia to oppose such strong opinions, and perhaps she was not really anxious to do so. Youth calls its natural bashfulness by many fine names. At any rate, early on the following day the two girls were escorted to Flushing by Arent, who captured the Colden ladies the first hour of his visit. They urged him to remain for a few days, but Arent had been selected for certain work in the Southern colonies, and purposed leaving by the night tide. The Governor, shrewd as he thought himself, had no suspicions; and when he asked Arent what course the *Manhattan* would take, and Arent answered "Southward," the learned old gentleman thought only of Jamaica rum and molasses, or perhaps a likely slave or two.

Arent's parting with Rose was in a crowd, and she gave him no visible token of interest. But on his face, and in

his eyes, there was that wonderful light that is always the reflection of some secret only Love can impart; and though Rose would not talk of him, and snapped in two Virginia's fine opinions of her brother, her interest in the young sailor was not to be denied.

"You pretend that for Arent you do not care; but I am sure you love him a little, Rose; is not that the truth?" asked Virginia.

"Say I grant so much?"

"You may safely do so."

"I am not sure that I do not grant too much. Do you know that Joris comes to-day? Anne Colden told me so. They have an idea that I am in love with Joris—which is the stupidest idea I know of."

"I think if you were, you would have told me."

"I could not have helped it, for of all the human passions love has the most to say for itself."

"Yet you will not talk about Arent. Love that is concealed preys on the life, Rose. I have read that often."

"How, pray?"

"There is consumption, or a broken heart, fevers, and what not. Some unhappy lovers have even taken their own lives."

"What tenfold fools they must have been! Faith, Virginia, I cannot believe such rubbish! The passing bell never tolls for girls who die of love. Doctors do not even put love in the list of diseases. Have no fear for Rose Harley. If she does not talk of her lover, it is because she is not in love with him. As for suicide, I am no lovelorn maid, knowing no better than to seek relief from my garter, or a leap into the next pond. The size of my understanding is beyond such outlets; but this is all by-the-by."

"Love is invincible, Rose. You will have to submit to it."

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"Love is not invincible. Love is constantly conquered by duty and other nobler virtues. Once I saw a statue of a man overcoming a lion. I believed in that statue. If I was a carver of marble, I would make a figure of a slight, small, lovely woman with her feet upon the wings of Love. The tiresome braggadocio Invincible should neither be able to stand before her, nor yet fly away from her."

"A victory like that no woman could gain."

"If you believed you could gain it, you would gain it. If you despaired of gaining it, you would rightfully lose it."

"Suppose your lover should leave you, Rose? Would it not kill you?"

"No. Of that sorrow I should soon cure myself."

"How?"

"I would not permit one hope to enter my heart, not one hope of any kind. If you are a reasonable creature no passion will survive the death of hope."

"Is there any passion you would die for?"

"Yes."

"Love?"

"Guess again."

"Honor?"

"Now you touch the truth. I would die for my honor, for my religion, for my country, for my father. So then honor, faith, patriotism, and filial affection are stronger than love—a fussy, aching, selfish, little passion, love is."

"Oh, Rose, surely you have never been in love. It is a heavenly kindness. It makes men and women angels, they forget all but their noblest feelings."

"Has it made Joris an angel? On the race course he looked like a very cross, disappointed man."

"Very handsome I thought him."

"I believe you. I'll swear you have built altars to him

in your heart. Take my advice, and do not scatter too much incense on them."

"There are no altars in my heart that Joris could not kneel at."

"Keep him on his knees; when he gets up, he will go away. Young De Lancey is coming this afternoon, and Harry Rutgers, and Captain Saville, and Mary Philipse, and Anna Van Cortland—and I know not who else. We shall have enough for dancing, however."

"I hope so; but I notice the men prefer cards."

"What would you? It is the men who have no thoughts to deal, who deal cards. We can do without such partners."

"Many men are afraid to talk now."

"Lest they discover themselves. I do not believe there is a loyal man in the country. All of them have an hatred to England that never sleeps, and at the very ears of each other they whisper treason, din, din, din, until they believe their own lies."

"Our grievances, Rose!"

"Stuff and nonsense! You have no grievances."

"We have."

"No, you have not—no reasonable ones."

"I think, and I say, we have reasonable ones."

"Well, then, it is assertion against assertion, a question of mere hardness of mouth. I could best you with that weapon, but I am too indifferent to try; still, I say again, you have no reasonable grievances."

"Rose, what has changed you so much! You are nothing like yourself."

"A simple change of surroundings, dear. When I am at the Van Vrooms' I think as the Van Vrooms; and when I am at Governor Colden's, I accommodate myself. If you go into society, Virginia, accommodation is the first, and the last, and the most important thing you must learn."

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"I shall never learn it."

"I had to, for I am a social creature, and find it easier to bear others than myself."

"I wished Arent could have stayed."

"I suspect Arent of—hum—m!"

"Of what?"

"Treasonable intentions; but I shall not turn informer."

"Poor Arent! Why did you teach him to love you?"

"The devil tempted me, and I taught him; also I enjoyed it. Let that pass. I am in a bad temper, Virginia, and I credit myself with a good cause. I have had the cruellest disappointment."

"Dear Rose, I am sorry! Can I help you bear it?"

"No, it is beyond ordinary relief. This morning Mrs. Colden gave me a letter from my father. I expected him to be in New York about the beginning of May, and he tells me his regiment has been ordered to Boston, where the people are behaving even worse than in New York."

"You might go to him."

"I know no one in Boston. And I do not want Boston. I want London. I hoped to have been there for the drawing-room at the end of the season; and the Derby and the other great summer events. Now all is uncertain. I am disappointed, and I feel the Coldens' small attempt at entertainments to be stupid. I hope I may behave myself decently, but I fear I have no civilities left."

"You are fond of boating and dancing, Rose; and there will be young men sufficient to put Arent out of memory."

"I wonder that you can compare any of them with Arent. Arent has always something to say worth hearing. These fine young men do not interest me. If you forbid them conversation about horses and dogs, dice and cards, balls and dress, you leave them only a desert of head and heart, in

which they lose themselves, and would lose you if you let them."

"They have politics now. Can you not imagine young De Lancey and Harry Rutgers in an argument?"

"They will not oblige us so far. No one will mention politics. It will be compliments and love-making; a good quarrelsome sentiment will find no one to lift it—unless I set Joris on young Rutgers."

"No, no, dear Rose. That would pain me very much. Joris has not settled his opinions yet. You might force him to take ground he could not give up. Too bad that would be."

"I thought that was his position. He is a rebel in your society, and loyal and royal among his father's friends. I heard Miss Colden say Justice Artaveldt was now in treaty for a captainship for his son, in the very whitest of the King's regiments."

"I believe it not. Joris would have told me. How should Miss Colden know?"

"That is past my guessing. Ask her."

"I do not speak of Joris to anyone but you."

"You are a darling, and I am as ill-natured as can be."

"But why?"

"Because I have to bear all sorts of disappointments for the dirty little catch-penny politics of people I care nothing about. Arent would have stayed a few days here, but for that southward business. My father would have been in New York, if he had not been obliged to remain in Boston and make some Mr. Otis and others hold their traitorous tongues. And if father had come to New York, in three weeks I might have been in London, instead of watching in this wilderness town a petty rebellion about a threepenny stamp. It is humiliating and provoking."

"New York is not a wilderness town, Rose."

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"What then? Its best business streets are shaded with trees."

"The trees are beautiful."

"But fancy trees in Pall Mall, or Holborn! My dear Rose, we are on the edge of the wilderness. The other day Captain Saville pointed out to me two old men sitting on the sidewalk under the trees, and they were smoking, and buying and selling a cargo. Very romantic and primitive, but nothing of a great business city about it. Admit so much, now?"

"New York is a great business city, and I will admit nothing contrary. And is not this a lovely house, and shall we not have some pleasant hours in it? Say yes, dear Rose."

"I will say anything you wish. And I do think we shall make a creditable pretense of amusement. But nothing ever happens at the Coldens' but what is proper and usual—they are that kind of people. Now at Aunt Portman's something unusual is always on hand—an engagement, a lovers' quarrel, a runaway match, a pot of money lost, a duel, a suicide, something, anything, talk ready made, sensation always on the brew, and all the new dances and card games."

"And here there is much the same thing in moderation."

"I hate moderation in anything. Fancy a moderate lover! My servant must love me to the skies, and to the bottom of the sea, and to the ends of earth. Does Joris love you in that fashion? Pray now tell me, what extremities he vows?"

"He knows I should not credit extremities. I trust his simple word, and he trusts mine."

"What miraculous faith! I would not trust a woman out of sight and hearing, nor a man even while he was in the act of protesting."

"Joris is——"

"Absolute perfection. And behold him walking in the garden. Velvet coat and breeches, satin vest and silk stockings, diamond buckles and lace ruffles, and sure as I am a sinner, the Strawberry Handkerchief at the last gold button! That will worry Nick Lisenard, who will burn with envy and curiosity till he gets the whole secret."

Then the girls went to the window and watched the young man. Joris was walking with the air of one who possessed the world and the fulness thereof; his figure admirably set off by his blue velvet coat trimmed with silver embroidery, his long white satin vest, his white silk stockings, and his low-cut high-heeled shoes adorned with diamond latchets. He wore no sword, but carried a clouded cane with a white tassel; an affectation which he used with a grace other youths vainly tried to copy. And yet conspicuous amid all this finery was a small pocket on the left side of his white vest, from which was shown a triangular bit of cambric, delicately embroidered with a bunch of strawberries.

Virginia hardly knew whether this exhibition pleased or displeased her. Perhaps she would have preferred a sealed packet in a secret drawer, in a locked desk; perhaps she liked the overt confession that his love was already given. But his appearance was so handsome that either way seemed the right way; and she began to hurry her toilet, hoping thus to have a word in the garden with her lover before the formalities of dinner, and that creditable pretense of amusement which Rose had thought possible. But Rose sauntered provokingly, and the dinner bell found them barely ready for the ceremony.

"I am not half-dressed," she complained. "Nothing I have on hangs right. I am thoroughly dissatisfied, and I shall make every one who speaks to me feel uncomfortable."

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It was not difficult to make people uncomfortable at Governor Colden's dinner table that day. His ways were not conciliatory, his words were solvent, and he had no convivial ideas capable of uniting the variety of feelings and opinions at his table. The young men were frequently at quarreling point, and only restrained by the Governor's presence or actual interference, and his efforts to introduce subjects alien to the one great subject in every mind generally ended in the very heart of that dispute.

He thought, for instance, that the Artaveldt race was a safe remove and tried to make it the topic of conversation. "I have heard your *Corisande* is a beautiful creature, Mr. Artaveldt," he said; "what is her color?"

"Black, sir, black as pitch," answered Joris; "she has soft black eyes, a straight back, a noble port, and she looks as if she was going to speak to you! 'Pon my honor, sir, you are compelled to stop and chat with her."

"And yet you use this noble creature for blacklegs and slaves to gamble with."

"Pardon, sir. We make bets on her speed. That is the custom of gentlemen of the first distinction. Racing is necessary to improve our breed of horses."

"I venture to say, Mr. Artaveldt, that the bettors and backers of horse-racing have no more idea of improving the breed of horses than gamblers have of improving the condition of the makers of cards and dice."

"It is at least a manly sport, sir."

"I differ with you. It takes the people from more manly diversions. They had far better be wrestling, throwing the bar, bowling, running, swimming, etc. Such sports make men robust, and qualify them for a militia."

"The Scotch are not horsemen as a race, sir," said De Lancey with an air of apology. It nettled Colden, who answered with some temper—

"No, but they can march any English or French regiment flat on the ground and then do a day's fighting. A Scotch soldier does not care for a horse; all he wants is standing ground, and his enemy face to face with him. Man! a horse would be in his way."

"You think then, Governor, that manly sports help to educate an effective militia?" asked a youth who looked ready enough to fight just as he was.

"Are the militia ever effective? If you can not rely on them, where is their efficiency?" was the answer.

"They are the only constitutional army there is," said Harry Rutgers.

"The militia would be a poor reliance, Mr. Rutgers, if New York was invaded by a foreign foe."

"Sir, I humbly submit that in a free city you could safely arm every man, and he would fight for his freedom and his home. We could trust New York to her militia."

"Sol Sol! We are getting beyond our boundary. I only meant to place manly exercises above silly gaping at running horses, but I understand there was no race yesterday."

"There was no company, sir," said Paul Worth, a little spitefully. "Gracious! it melted away like butter on hot coals. Eight or nine hundred people vanished before you could ask them why?"

"There was a good reason," said Artaveldt. "And as for the effectiveness of the militia——"

"All we want from them is a dance, and a few civil words about our beauty, and I suppose they can do so much for us," and Rose looked at Joris as if half doubtful of his abilities in these directions.

He was nettled in two ways. He had been prevented from reminding the Governor of the deeds of prowess done by the New York militia on the fields of Canada; and a sort of slur had been cast upon his accomplishments as a

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gentleman and gallant. At least Rose's air of uncertainty had given that impression.

There was momentary silence, and then Joris assured her ladyship she would find the New York militia her most obedient servants.

"But it is too near the Sabbath to dance this evening," said Mrs Colden. "Suppose we take a stroll by the seashore, and watch the sunset."

"How charming! How natural! How interesting!" were some of the responses, and Mrs. Colden added, "There is a lovely little cottage a mile away. An English gentleman—nobleman, some say—built it, and brought there a young wife whose beauty was marvelous. One day he gave the key of the place to the Governor, and asked him to keep it until he returned. He has never returned. All is as he left it."

"And the girl wife?" asked Rose.

"She may have gone away with him. Some people believe she did, or——"

"Or was murdered, perhaps."

"No one has said so; many have had strange thoughts. He loved her passionately."

"Men often kill what they love. I remember hearing of a nobleman who had run away with a beautiful girl, and who after a year's absence returned to England without her. Perhaps I am on the edge of discovery," cried Rose. "Madame, let us take the walk by all means."

In a short time the party were strolling towards the deserted cottage. It stood in a lonely nook hidden by great forest trees, but in the front it commanded a wide sea view. Mrs. Colden opened the door and they entered. An air of unspeakable sorrow permeated the empty place. It had been left evidently at a moment's notice. Nothing had been removed or put away. A drinking glass and an open book

were on the table. A pair of slippers were carelessly lying on the hearthrug. On a nail behind the door a large Panama hat hung. The furniture was in its place, the silver and china in a corner cupboard, and a lady's silk cloak lined with minever was thrown over the end of the sofa. In one corner a harp, with strings loose or broken, stood, and by the hearth there was an empty cradle, with the most dainty furnishings—laced linen, and satin coverlet, and a little pillow embroidered with a cypher Rose vainly tried to understand.

"It is all too pitiful," she cried. "Here is a dead romance—perhaps a great tragedy. Did no one ask what came of the poor lady?"

"Why not suppose that she went away with her husband?" said Virginia. "Madame tells us that their own ship lay at anchor here, when they were not on her. They came and went frequently. They may come again."

"They will come no more," answered Rose. "Everything here is finished."

"I shall always believe the lady was murdered," said Mary Philipse. "Young ladies ought not to go away with strange men, unless their fathers and mothers go with them;" and the handsome schoolgirl plainly showed that she disapproved, even while she pitied, the supposed victim of man's cruelty.

"After this," continued Rose, "I abjure love in all its forms. Let those love who dare to love. If I feel the least tenderness for any male creature I will remember this forsaken home, and then, in faith, it will be more than mortal man that can win a thought from me."

About this circumstance she talked much to Virginia, and together they went twice more to the deserted home. It was to both the event of the visit. The rest of the time passed in its usual course of dressing and dancing, walking,

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sailing, driving, and card playing, with flirtation enough to season the monotony of a life given over to what was called diversion. But Rose was throughout the whole week distraint and unlike herself, and Joris, irritable with her contradictions, asked Virginia, "What is the matter with my Lady Rose? Her airs and lassitudes are insufferable, and if I attempt any of the familiarities she permitted, yes encouraged, at your house, she now receives them with such a haze of impertinence in her eyes and manner as would make me draw my sword if she were only a man."

"Rose cannot give you favors she gives to no other young man in this company. That would put her in a false position."

"She is infernally cross and pettish."

"She is in love."

"And you, Virginia, are so exceedingly clever and beautiful, I hardly know you. You have grown lovelier and lovelier on flatteries, for you are now the fashion, and have become a toast—something of a coquette also."

"Just as I was, I am, Joris. If I am toasted, I know it not, and I wish it not, and I count it no honor to have my name called over a wine cup, in the hands and mouths of a dozen men. So much you might, you ought to, say for me. And let me tell you, Joris, I am unhappy at our secret engagement. My good father and mother ought to know."

"I will speak to your father when we return to the city. I know not how to break the subject to my father. He has plans for me I cannot interfere with."

"Until you have your father's consent, it will be folly to speak to my father. The first thing he will ask is, 'What message from Justice Artaveldt do you bring?' And if you say 'I have no message,' he will answer, 'then it is not my time to speak,' and so rise and go away. My father

I know so well. Very jealous of my honor he is in the smallest matter."

"But he will not, he can not, refuse his consent to our marriage."

"I think he will refuse. Many years ago he chose a husband for me, and lately very often he speaks of him. It is Captain De Vries. Do you know him?"

"Know him! I know nothing about him! But if he interferes between you and me, I will know him, and that to some purpose. Why did you not tell me this story before?"

"Joking, I thought my father was. I was a little maid, a schoolgirl, and when the Captain brought me beautiful things from China, and India, and father called me his little wife, it meant nothing to me. It was like a pet name, a joke, I had no sense of its meaning. But now I see that my father is in very earnest, and my mother also told me his heart was set on marrying me to Captain De Vries."

"We go home to-morrow. I will then ask for his consent to our marriage. If he says yes, well and good; if he says no, we must be married without his consent."

"That is an impossible folly, Joris. It could never be."

"What should prevent it? Am I not your equal?"

"Yes."

"Yes. Is that all you can say? I believe in my soul, Virginia, you are jealous, because I have wasted a few attentions on other beauties. You must not give way to jealousy. It is a despicable passion. I never could endure it. You know that I love you as the light of my eyes. You are adorable. You have my whole heart. I live only in your smile. Dearest girl, what beauty can compare with you? They are all prettyish and country-dance well, but you are a queen among them. As for Rose, I hope she will not return with you."

"Never mind Rose. She is the same sweet Rose, only she is in despairing love."

"With Arent?"

Virginia nodded gravely.

"I thought the wind might come from that quarter. Well, then, she is her own mistress in a year. She can marry as she wishes."

"No. Race, caste, pride, wealth, family, religion, a score of things control her. Such a marriage can never take place. She knows it, and so she suffers. We must bear with her. She is doing her best to forget—a hard thing it seems to do. There is Arent, too—poor Arent!"

As they were speaking they were joined by Rose. She bowed to Joris, and said, "Come, Virginia, let us walk once more as far as the empty cottage."

"But why, Rose? It makes you sad."

"Let me tell you, it is for that reason I wish to go. I will fill my heart with love's tragedy, so then there will be no more room left for love's fatal passion."

"Love, always love," said Joris.

"Love, always love," answered Rose; "and yet," she added, "'tis a dreadful word. I tremble to speak or to write it."

Then Joris offered his company, but it was refused; and the two girls walked alone to the sorrowful place. It filled them with an unconquerable, wistful pity, so that even when they were alone in their own room they forgot the anxieties of their own loves in the piteous mystery of its appeal.

"I cannot help feeling as if the poor lady was murdered, Rose," said Virginia.

Rose was standing before the mirror combing her long black hair. She turned with ivory comb lifted in her hand, and letting her loosened tresses fall around her, she looked at Virginia. Her face was white, her eyes full of fear, her

voice low and thick. "She was not murdered, Virginia. She was loved to the last. If she had been murdered I should have known it as I sat in her chair to-night."

"But how? I can not see."

"I will tell you. I have lived in old English houses and castles red with murder. I have seen, I have heard, and I have felt the wraiths of evil fate. Virginia, murder tells its tale and will not be dumb. Fifty years, one hundred years, three hundred years, is not the date of the bond to the place of their blood. They haunt it, Virginia. They make you shiver as you tread upon it. They whisper the crime till the walls of the room repeat it. If you go to sleep you dream of the dead. If there had been murder in that cottage, I must have felt it. Virginia, you can not tell how good it has been to live in this new world, in new houses unstained by blood, and unhaunted by the furies of ancient crimes."

"How sensitive you are, Rose! Such a nature is a great suffering."

"The suffering made me sensitive when I was four years old. I knew the ghosts of Cressacre Castle—a queer, bad lot they were, men and women."

"Oh, Rose, what did you do?"

"Prayed for them. That was what most of them came for. Poor souls! I wonder if they miss me. I will say a prayer for their peace this night. I may soon be among them."

"Rose! Rose! What are you saying?"

"When Arent and I parted, it was the end of the world—to me. The end of love is the end of life."

"This beautiful world, Rose——"

"Is just a still waste, in which I have lost everything."

"Arent will return to you."

"I forbade him."

"Why did you forbid him?"

"Because I was proud and cruel, and did not know how much a woman could suffer."

"You will go back home with me?"

"I will come to you in a short time. Go home with Joris. You ought to keep your lover more at your service."

"We are going home with the Governor in the morning. We shall land at the Battery, and walk together up Broadway."

"I hope you may have a pleasant walk, but I feel sure the Governor had bad news this afternoon. New York is behaving disgracefully."

"Others are also behaving disgracefully."

"Meaning England?"

"Meaning England. Good-night. Go to sleep and dream of Arent."

"In truth, it is what I usually do. After midnight, when dreams come, I wander gayly over the sea till I find him. Two night ago I saw him standing by the main mast, and he was thinking of me. I stood by him. I said to him all I would never say when awake. I kissed him as I went away. Virginia, here is a mystery, solve me it—if you can. The room was dark, my eyes were shut, but I saw Arent and his ship more plainly than I see you. Tell me, where does the light of dreams come from?"

CHAPTER FIVE

THE UNWELCOME LOVER

THE passage of the Stamp Act had for a few days an influence on New Yorkers best expressed by the old-fashion word dumfounded. In their hearts, the great merchants of the city had believed such folly impossible to the English government. Yet they heard the bill had passed without amendment, debate, protest, or dissenting vote. It seemed incredible. It turned their business upside down. They could not realize that without stamped paper their notes of hand would be valueless, their ships at sea prizes to the first captors, suits at law impossible to them, transfers of real estate invalid, and inheritances irreclaimable. They saw also that a multitude of lesser wrongs hung around these great ones; and that even their domestic arrangements must be chronicled on stamped paper, or be illegal.

No wonder that for a few days they remained silent and passive. It was the wisdom of an anger that meant to take no false step. Yet the Governor chortled and snickered at the ominous silence, and was quite sure the Act would enforce itself. Even the fiery Otis had told Boston, "If the Act becomes a law, we can only submit"; and Franklin had written from London, pointing out that "it fell particularly hard upon printers"; never doubting that it must go into effect.

The tone of New York was very different from the first. "There is not gold and silver enough in all the colonies to carry this Act through!" cried John Watts. "What can be expected but open opposition?" said William Smith;

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and John Moran Scott in the New York *Gazette* wrote boldly, "If the interest of the mother country and her colonies can not be made to coincide, then the connection between them ought to cease, and sooner or later must inevitably cease." Thus New York at this early date plainly pointed to independence. As for the Act itself, it was reprinted and hawked about the streets as "The Folly of England, and the Ruin of America."

Indeed it soon became impossible to restrain the growing tide of popular indignation. From New York a constant flood of inflammatory papers was scattered over the country, and this secret correspondence of the "Sons of Liberty" baffled the government's utmost vigilance. Postmasters and postriders were continually cross-examined by Colden, but to no purpose. In fact, the great majority of men in the country were secret colporteurs of liberty, and their reticence and faithfulness was so perfect that the authorities never succeeded in proving a single case.

These general conditions had numerous personal and individual aspects. The party who supported the King, and who considered an Act of Parliament in the light of a divine decree, were indignant at those who dared to criticise the one and defy the other. Financial ruin stared them in the face; ruin, which was the deliberate work of a crowd of fanatics, whose principles they abhorred, and whose punishment they ardently desired. They were curtailed in their enterprises and even in their pleasures by a public sentiment which at first they despised, but which they soon found themselves compelled to obey. There was open dissension in many families, and friends of a lifetime ceased to know each other.

For every man—no matter what side he had taken—was hurt in the most sensitive part of his life; his business was assailed. And his business represented his honor, his

civic standing, the comfort of his home and family, his individual importance. Yet the opponents of the Stamp Act were drawing every burgher into their own miserable condition—they were ruining the trade of the city; and the merchants, one and all, no matter what they thought of the Act, must suffer and fall together.

In this general insurrection of feeling, the women struck a dominant note. They made no secrets of their animosities; they regarded no civilities in their disputes. If any of their sex appeared in clothing of English quality and make, the lash of their tongues and scorn of their manner was quite unrestrained. They made it a disgrace to wear anything but clothes of home manufacture, and every luxury of the toilet and table which represented English workmanship was rigorously abandoned. Any one can perceive that a woman had in this wide-open field every weapon she could desire; and doubtless many a social grudge and offense found in the compulsions of the Stamp Act comforting reprisals. It was the moving spring of every word and action. Wherever two or three men were gathered together, they were encouraging each other in their resistance to the Stamp Act. Wherever women were busy spinning and weaving, they were almost certain to have both public and private reasons for their enthusiasm.

But these men and women were of the heroic caste. Clothed in homespun, they were clothed in immortality; for never surely will there be a generation of American or English freemen forgetful of these noble traders, sitting in their silent stores and facing ruin for the sake of that deathless element of Liberty's Magna Charta, "No taxation without representation." They were American Hampdens, standing for the same principle that carried the English Hampden into the battlefield. It was only twenty shillings in the English case, it was only three pennies in the

American case; but neither English nor Americans were beguiled by the smallness of the imposition. They knew that it was the open door for oppression, boundless in extent and endless in duration.

Thus the summer of A. D. 1765 passed tumultuously away. The beautiful young city,

. . . round whose virgin zone

The rivers, like two mighty arms, were thrown,

was bathed in her usual bright sunshine, and the same cool winds stirred the leaves of the poplars, and dappled the pavements on which the gravely anxious or angry citizens sat, or stood, talking. But, oh, the change in the once busy, cheerful streets! A few months ago they had been crowded with drays and wagons and vehicles of every kind, and the air resonant with all the sounds of commerce and humanity; now they were so silent that the guffaw of some idle negro teamster sent an echo through them. For it must be remembered that more than two hundred of the largest business houses had signed the agreement to import no English goods until the Stamp Act was repealed—their stores were practically closed, and their ships rocking idly at their piers.

The men themselves had suffered a noticeable change. In place of their rich broadcloth, silk hosiery, and fine linen, they were dressed in homemade jeans, or woollen cloths, and home-knit stockings. No powder was on their hair, no lace on their linen; no English chains or fobs or rings were visible. The princely merchants of a few months previous had become, in appearance, the frontier pioneers; and the luxuries of fashion and civilization lay unasked for in the closed stores of the silent city.

The women fairly followed suit; though with many some darling luxury was kept against all advices and upbraidings.

Thus Virginia Van Vroom would not give up her English shoes. She declared homemade shoes lamed her, and she really walked in them with such evident distress that her feet were perforce excused the mortifications that other portions of her toilet gave her. It was a hard time both for men and women, that summer of 1765, and when Colonel Rutgers passionately called the English government "a desolating, damnable power," New York city was sufficient evidence of the truth of his assertion.

Yet, in the midst of all this calamity, lovers found every opportunity they desired. The anxiety, the suspense, the watching for news, the Governor's anger, the tittle-tattle of private hatreds, the injustice of public wrongs, were all food for the voracious little god. They were a kind of bitters that whetted his appetite for the sweets of confidence and affection. Lovers had always some new tale to tell, some wrong against which they could effectively spread their own magnanimity and courage.

The engagement of Joris and Virginia was, however, still unrecognized. On their return from the Governor's house party, they had found Captain Van Vroom in a mood of great exhilaration regarding Batavius De Vries. He had just had a letter from him, and it was apparently full of financial success and good news. After the receipt of this letter, when not talking of the Stamp Act, he was talking of Batavius, and he always managed to connect Virginia and her future, with happy predictions concerning his favorite. Generally Virginia refused to notice both his innuendoes and his plain assertions; but she understood that the claims of Joris would be passionately denied, if presented at a time so inauspicious to them.

Perhaps they were both rather glad of the secrecy which they believed to be so necessary. Love likes hidden ways, and little compromises. He is also a shameless seeker after

sympathy, and perfectly willing to invent reasons for asking it. Joris was aware that his own father would receive the news of his engagement with angry denials, and he expected nothing better from Virginia's father. So he liked Virginia to pity his situation, he liked her to advise him to conceal his love for her, he enjoyed the sweet duplicities of tenderness that was forced to secret expression.

And after all, what could be settled until the Stamp Act business was arranged? Besides, Justice Artaveldt had further complicated matters by attaching himself positively to the Governor's party. Captain Jan said "it was the homespun." He believed Artaveldt would prefer slavery in satin to liberty in jeans; and he spoke contemptuously of young Artaveldt's English riding-boots, and jockey-like coat, with its scarlet facings and gold buttons.

"I wonder me at him!" he cried angrily. "I wonder how he can face the home-dressed Liberty Boys. Ashamed of himself he ought to be!"

And Virginia answered not in words, but her whole lovely personality radiated denials, from the upward fling of her head to the restless tapping of her English-shod feet.

With her mother she was more confidential. "Father is talking continually of Batavius," she said scornfully. "He has made some money, it seems, and so then he is the man in a thousand."

"Very well, that is a good thing. What ails thee at Batavius? Always great friends you have been, and many fine gifts he has brought thee. Thou should not forget the past—also I think thou art dear to him."

"I wish not to be dear to him."

"It is better for thee to be dear to Batavius than dear to that fop-of-fops, Joris Artaveldt."

"Because Joris will not make a fright of himself, thou

and my father begin to hate him. Very well, so much more will I love him."

"Then thou wilt breed pain and sorrow for thyself, for be sure of this—thy father will marry thee to Batavius De Vries."

"I will throw myself in the river, rather than I will be his wife. Tell that to my father."

"Not much would he heed such words. They are foolishness. Thou hast read them in some of those novel-books Lady Rose brings thee."

"But I hate Batavius, mother."

"That is nothing. Many girls I have heard say, 'I hate Bram! I hate Case! I hate Peter!' and I have seen them cry and wring their hands, and want to die then and then; and so soon as the man is their own man, in one week they are crazy about him, and there is no one in the wide world to match him. That is the way. Hate is turned into love by marriage. What is the matter with thee? crying, crying for nothing at all! Batavius is handsome and rich, and so easy with women, thou may rule him like a little child. Very fortunate art thou. I say that plainly."

Such conversations were as frequent as they were futile, all the summer long; for Madame remained loyal to her husband's desire, and indeed, for her own part, she was quite of his opinion in her estimate of Virginia's two lovers. Joris she admired, and in a measure liked; Batavius she trusted; and there was no hesitation in her mind as to which of the men would make the most satisfactory and comfortable husband. She listened to Virginia's complaints and entreaties with a certain amount of sympathetic understanding, but she always, in the end, insisted on the superiority of Batavius as a husband. "When you marry yourself," she would say, "it is not a man that is handsome to look at, or pleasant to dance with, that you want. No.

it is the good provider, and the kind helper in sickness and trouble." And though such advice had apparently no effect on Virginia, it did really, though unconsciously, influence her. Unavoidably she began to regard Batavius as a fate from which she could not escape; and Joris as the glorious, but unattainable, Love of her crossed and unhappy destiny.

One morning in September she was walking slowly up Broadway. She had been to the Walton house with a letter from her father, containing good news concerning the proposed Congress of the colonies in New York, during the following month. In fact, the ready enthusiasm of all to form a continental union was the great hope which had brightened the listless, inactive summer. But now, at least, twenty-eight deputies, speakers of the colonial assemblies, had pledged themselves to be present at the New York congress in October; and though Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia were prevented by their Governors from sending representatives, letters of sympathy with the movement had been forwarded, with promises to abide by the decisions of the United Congress. Van Vroom, with the aid of his son Arent, had been working hard for this result; and in the joy of its certain accomplishment, he had sent a letter containing many hopeful details to his friend and coadjutor, William Walton. Virginia had asked to carry this letter, for she had friends in Pearl and Cherry Streets, and she knew the happiness of being the bringer of good tidings.

So with the light of many welcomes on her face, she was passing the park when she was overtaken by Joris. He had been to the fort, and was riding, but he gave his horse into the charge of his servant, and taking his place at Virginia's side, he sauntered slowly home with her. It was a lovely autumn morning, and the bright young city had the atmosphere of not unhopeful waiting. Here and there, shops and booths had been opened for the sale of goods of

home manufacture; and there was a pleasant stir round such marts. The Liberty Boys were standing in small parties at the street corners watching the English soldiers, who were ever ready to stir up a quarrel. Sitting or standing under the trees, men were discussing the last letter from the London emissary of the New York colonists; or congratulating each other on the certainty of what every one felt to be a most important event—the meeting of the Colonial Congress in October.

Now and then some youth would look contemptuously at the English clothing of Joris; and occasionally words of advice accompanied the look; but as a general thing the appearance of Virginia protected her escort from unpleasant notice. She was dressed in a grey woolen frock, which had been woven in the Van Vroom household, and though the little cambric tippet, frilled with lace, which covered her shoulders was evidently an imported adornment, it passed unnoticed in the superior smartness of her homemade gypsy bonnet. For with her own hands she had fashioned it of braided corn-shucks, and trimmed it with ears of ripe wheat, and with scarlet poppies from the Van Vroom garden. Its picturesque shape and gay coloring had won her many hearty compliments that morning, and when Joris added his praises, she felt that her toilet was both a personal and political success.

As they reached the outskirts of the city they lingered lovingly in the warm grass and the cool shade of the elms, and at the Van Heemskirks' gate stood a few minutes to speak to Madame Van Heemskirk, who had been gathering tomatoes, and had a basket full of them in her hands. She praised Virginia's dress and gypsy hat, and asked if her mother had wool enough to keep her women busy. "If not," she added, "I can share a little with her. Tell her that, Virginia."

"I will, madame, and many thanks for your kind offer. My father thinks we shall do great things next month. He says Congress is now certain."

"I know not, child. All this quarreling troubles me. Who can say where any fresh road will lead to?"

"Some of the colonists think this road will lead to liberty, madame," said Joris.

"Well, then, as my good husband says, we had to draw the line somewhere about here. The English government had gone far enough. If we submit now, it will be all up with us; that is what Joris Van Heemskirk says. However, the King's hands don't reach to heaven. He goes as far as he is let go, not as far as he would like to go. There is One above George King of England. Yes, indeed!"

"The King is not to blame, madame," said Joris.

"I suppose not. What does the King know? With other men's ears he hears, with other men's eyes he sees. God help him! Have you plenty of tomatoes, Virginia?"

"Oh, yes, madame, thank you."

"Then good-by, little one! And, Virginia, take care of your homespun dress, and your corn shuck hat; some day you will be proud of them."

They went away laughing over such an improbability, and were still mirthful at the prospect when they reached the Semple house. Madame Semple was at the open gate watching her son Neil walking towards the city. They stopped and bade her good-morning, and she looked them both over from head to feet.

"You are a' right, Joris," she said; "and, Virginia, youth and beauty can wear hodden-gray, 'specially if there's a trifle o' French lace and a gypsy hat wi' scarlet poppies aboon it. But, oh, lassie, if you were fifty, instead o' eighteen, you would turn Tory, rather than thole it."

"Indeed I would not, madame."

"As for myself, I'm wearing the brawest silks and satins I have to my name—on the Sabbath Day. There's nae dare to cast it up to me in the kirk, and on the six days, when they might say this or that, I wear, as you may see, my ain tartan—the Gordon tartan, and no less; and I would like to see king or kaiser that would order it off me."

"I am an American girl, and have no tartan, madame."

"Of course not. It would be a queer thing if any Van had a tartan, though it might come, in a way, by the mother's side. It's a great comfort to be Hieland Scotch, for when Madame Liberty wears her hodden-gray, you can don your bonnie checker stuff."

"I thought," said Joris, "that King George the Second had forbidden the clans to wear their tartans."

"Naeboddy minded him. My father wore his Gordon tartan till he died, and he was buried in it—plaid, and kilt, and philabeg. He would hae worn his dirk likewise, but there was one or two affairs to settle wi' it, and sae he left the dirk to his next of kin. The lad settled them with a good heart and a ready hand, and he's wearing the dirk and the tartan to-day, God bless him! I saw your father an hour ago, Virginia. He was walking vera majestically homeward. I'm thinking he had the sough o' good news in his heart, he stepped his way north wi' such an air o' satisfaction. Weel, weel, my cakes are needing looking after, so you may carry yoursel's off now, you twa foolish bairns! Thinking of marrying, nae doubt—baith o' you. Anyway, Virginia, wait till you can wear a decent wedding dress—a bit o' white silk, or the like o' it. Virginia, what is your mother wearing?"

"A dress like the one I have on, madame."

"Poor thing! And her wi' quilted satin and lutestring petticoats, and long sacques o' every quality; bodices laced,

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and stomachers of a' makes and descriptions! I'm fairly sorry for her."

"Mother does not mind. If her dress was all the trouble, she——"

"To be sure. There's Arent too——"

"Arent wears his uniform."

"That's a comfort, but I fancy the men like their jeans and homespun. A more impertinent lot o' young, crowing cockrels you couldn't find in all creation than the lads parading the streets o' New York, and calling themsel's Liberty Boys. The Domine says they may put on broad-cloth again, but he's feared they'll never put off their homespun manners. Now my Neil is just dignity itsel', and you could get no free and easy ways with him, no matter what he was wearing—but Neil isna a common kind o' young man."

Joris bowed assent, and Virginia said "No, indeed!" and then Madame, with a sarcastic little laugh, hurried into the house to look after her cakes. She was rolling up her long sleeves as she went, and she called after the lovers a few words they did not hear.

"Nor like to," she commented. "They are that ta'en up wi' themselves. It's an auld, auld way, and yet aye a young and foolish one—when Alexander Semple first came becking and bowing to me, I wasn't altogether sensible-like; I dare say I was very nearly as silly as the rest o' lovers. It's a bit o' foolishness in every life, and it is a poor life wanting it. God knows that!"

Hand in hand Virginia and Joris went slowly homeward, and then lingered in the Van Vroom garden to enjoy the pungent odor of the box hedges, and the hot, imperious perfume of the lavender bed, whose ripe, fragrant spikes were intoxicating the bees and the humming birds hanging in delirious delight over it. Joris felt its subtle power to an

extent that astonished Virginia. He bent his head to the fascinating odor, and seemed bewildered with its penetrating power. He rubbed the flowers in his hands, and inhaled their sweetness with a sort of rapture; and Virginia stood looking at him with an expression not altogether sympathetic. She was indeed wondering how he could be so enthusiastic over a bed of lavender, and so generally cool and prudent over subjects of far greater interest and importance. She had not yet learned that every soul has some subtle doorway to its inmost self, and that the sense of smell is the most frequent and the most potent of all such entrances; consequently she could not realize that it was in that very moment embalming herself and her love in the memory of Joris by an everlasting odor, sweet smelling as the dews of Paradise. Indeed, she was almost troubled when Joris took from his breast pocket a little case of scarlet morocco, and showing her within its folds her own betrothal gift—the Strawberry Handkerchief—said—

“Gather some lavender, dearest, and with your own hands sweeten it forever.”

“But I would rather not, Joris,” she answered. “Mother has often told me that there is always quarreling in a house that uses lavender. She likes bergamot better.”

“I never heard such a thing before, and I do not believe it, Virginia. I defy anything to make us quarrel,” and he held the little pocket open for her to perfume.

Quite reluctantly she obeyed that mastery which Joris could always exercise over her if he desired. She gathered a dozen spikes, blue as the sky, and sweet as heavenly incense, and dropped them between the folded lawn; and then a feeling of finality came between them, and both were aware that the dream of that happy morning was over, and the duties of daily life waiting for them.

Walking a little apart, they approached the house, and

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heard as they entered it the sound of hearty laughter and domineering talk. "There is some stranger present, Joris," said Virginia softly, and Joris answered, "Very likely there is news."

Together they entered the living room, and then involuntarily both of them stood still. At the large table Captain Van Vroom and Batavius De Vries were sitting. Between them there was a pile of papers tied with pink tape, and many little columns of golden guineas; and the faces of both men were shining with satisfaction. For a moment the picture remained unbroken, then Batavius leaped to his feet, and with outstretched hands came towards Virginia.

"My Virginia!" he cried. "My dear Virginia! My own sweet Virginia! But you have grown—yes, indeed you have grown, and I am glad of that. Will you not speak? Have you no kiss for Batavius?" and he made as though he would embrace her.

She drew back and stood erect, and her face became white and cold as snow.

"Sir!" said Joris.

"Be quiet, Joris!" she cried with passionate imperiousness. "I can speak for myself."

"But you will speak to me, my Virginia! Many lovely presents I have brought thee. Speak, dear one."

"I am glad you are safe home, Batavius."

"Then kiss me. You kissed me when I went away."

"I was a schoolgirl then, a child."

"Yes, and now you are a woman. That is right. I have no objections to modesty in a woman. I approve of it. And who is your friend? I do not remember him."

Then Virginia introduced Lieutenant Artaveldt to Captain De Vries, and the Captain said, "The land service, I suppose. I am a sailor, and a trader. Come down to my ship—*The Arms of Stuyvesant*—and I will give you some

strange things, both to eat and to drink. A man does not go round the world, and bring nothing back, or a great fool he must be; and Virginia's friend will be welcome to me. I am honest in these things."

And he certainly looked into Artaveldt's eyes with the clear, open expression of a man who has no second motive. Nor was he unhandsome. The sea had bronzed his broad face, and his hair hung straight and black around it. He was of medium height, a vigorous, sunburned man, with splendid teeth and round black eyes, and a voice holding the frank, yet melancholy, tones of all seafaring men. In a few years he would probably be stout and heavy, but as yet this blemish was only a tendency, not a fact; and indeed was quite hidden by the loose sailor's dress of white linen which he wore.

While he was talking to Virginia and Joris, Captain Van Vroom was quietly removing the gold and the papers, and Madame was superintending the laying of the dinner table. And as reticence was a quality quite unknown to Batavius, he at once produced some curious little boxes holding Indian jewelry, and insisted on Virginia and Joris examining them.

"I judge of such things correctly," he said with the air of a connoisseur, "and I am satisfied with the choice I have made. Is not this opal a gem worth having, Virginia? And these rings, my dear? And this locket set with sapphires. When I was in London I intended to have my portrait painted for you, and put into the locket, but I found disagreeable events in London; and people were asking me this and that about affairs I had nothing to do with. So I made haste out to sea, for it is a steady principle with me not to meddle in other people's business. I came quickly away from Boston for the same reason."

"And I think in New York you will not be able to

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escape meddling," said Joris. "The question here is liberty, and nothing but liberty. All other considerations are forgotten."

"Well then, Lieutenant, I adore liberty—that is, peaceful liberty."

"It will not be peaceful liberty long, Batavius," said Virginia. "The rights of the people have been trampled on, and they are very angry."

"Wherever I went in Boston they were talking just such nonsense; scoffing at the government, and exciting quarrels; some new complaint every morning! That showed the perversity of their hearts. I dislike discontented people, who are always speaking and writing against the government."

"The government and the Governor of Massachusetts are very unpopular, Captain, I believe?" said Joris interrogatively.

"I will tell you very plainly, Lieutenant, that I saw the Governor when I was in Boston. He came into James Bradwell's store, and stood close by my side and ordered some Cyprus wine. And when I spoke politely to him,—for I am always polite,—he took off his hat, and was quite friendly with me. So I let him feel that he had my approval, and Bradwell was astonished at the notice taken of me. That is my way. I am a sailor and a trader, and I will have nothing to do with the King's business. My own business is on the *Arms of Stuyvesant*, or at Van Vroom and Company, 14 Wall Street, coffee and spice brokers, and dealers in East Indian wares of all descriptions; glad to see you at either place, Lieutenant."

"Thank you, Captain. But tell me, if your rights as a citizen were taken from you, what would you do?"

"My rights are on my ship. If any one, in a thievish or unfriendly spirit, touched a plank of her I should not

complain. I should get rid of the offender for everlasting. Grumblers are low fellows. I can't bear them."

"Still, Captain, we must all bear our share in our country's honor or dishonor."

"I am a Dutchman, Lieutenant, born in Amsterdam and christened in the Oude Kirk of Amsterdam. The government of Holland has no quarrel with her burghers. Every man minds his own business, and lets the government attend to public affairs. I tell you plainly, that a man who is a sailor and a trader can not afford to get the name of troubling himself about politics. It means bankruptcy!" and Batavius spoke at last with an irritable nonchalance, for his almost constant life on the ocean had given him a double portion of that isolation of mind common in a greater or less degree to all sailors. He knew little of life on shore and he had no curiosity about it, except as it touched his own life; so he turned to Virginia with a fresh eagerness. "Come, dear one!" he said, "let us look at the gems. So beautiful on thy beautiful hands they will be, and the sapphires! I thought of thy eyes the moment I saw them."

Virginia held the boxes in her hands, but before she could make any reply, young Harry Rutger entered; and as he came with a special letter to Captain De Vries, Joris and Virginia found the opportunity to withdraw themselves into the comparative privacy of the large bow window. It was full of flowers, as usual, and Joris made some remark about the glorious variety of the fuchsias; but Virginia heard him not. Her whole mind was bent on the complicating circumstances in which their love was tangled, and she said in an undertone—

"It were best for you to leave us, Joris. Every moment I fear myself there will be trouble."

"An explanation of our positions must now be made,

Virginia. I wish with all my heart it had taken place earlier."

"The fault of the delay is mine, Joris. I thought delay was best. So many things that seemed against us, have come up, one after the other. I did not believe Batavius would be here before the feast of Saint Nicholas, he has always returned about that time."

"He spoke to you as if you were going to marry him."

"That is what he thinks. Since I was a baby he has thought so; and my father and mother have said it. Until I knew thee, I never dreamed of opposing it."

"And thou loved that man? No, it is not possible!"

"Well, then, I did not dislike him. He has been a kind of fairy godfather to me. Beautiful things of all kinds he brought me, and I had not seen thee then, Joris. After I saw thee, dearest, there was no other in all the world."

"Now what is to be done? To me it appears best to tell your father at once we are promised to each other."

"My father will speak to me as soon as Batavius goes. That is certain. Then I will tell him plainly that I will marry no one but thee. Thou tell thy father the same thing, and to-morrow we shall know better how to tread our steps rightly. Mother is calling us to dinner; do not stay to-day, Joris."

"It seems that you are glad to be quit of me."

"Now you are unreasonable. You know—oh, you know why it is best!"

So with an air of some slight offense, Joris left, passing Batavius and Harry Rutgers—who were in earnest conversation—with a formal bow; and nursing all the way to Artaveldt house a feeling of anger at his dismissal. He could see that it was best for him to leave, he could feel that a very few more affectionate intimacies between Bata-

vius and Virginia would make speech imperative to him, and he knew that his engagement to Virginia required some authority to render it worth considering by Captain Van Vroom. Yet in spite of this complex situation, he felt wounded by Virginia's readiness to dismiss him; he would rather have remained and watched developments, and he thought Virginia might have trusted his prudence and his self-control.

"But there were rings and lockets to examine," he muttered angrily, "and the lover who comes with gems and rich presents is not to be put off for a poor gentleman who has only his heart and his sword to offer. Virginia is a woman, and therefore to be won by any black-browed pirate who can deck her hands with opals, and her throat with sapphires, and *his likeness included!*" and he laughed with a consuming scorn at the idea, and lashed it with his riding whip as he went hastily onward.

For he did really think Virginia had been more polite and interested than there was any occasion to be, and, moreover, that he himself had been shuffled off at dinner-time like a most unwelcome guest. And it did really seem as if that day Joris was the one person *not* wanted. Captain Jan never noticed his absence, Batavius accepted it as an event too ordinary to require comment. Madame had made a place for him at the table, and was the only one who made an inquiry concerning him.

"No one asked him to stay mother," said Virginia, "and of course he has gone home."

"And pray, since when has Joris Artaveldt needed to be asked to draw in his chair?"

"There were strangers to-day, and he thought he might be in the way."

"Strangers! What mean you? Joris and Harry Rutgers have been companions ever since they can remember.

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Batavius is one with our family. He was very civil to Joris, I am sure, and ready to accept him as thy friend. What is it thou would have? Very unreasonable some girls are!"

The dinner was prolonged far into the afternoon. Harry Rutgers was anxious for any news Batavius could give regarding affairs in England and Boston. The Captain and Batavius were in high spirits, and Madame echoed their satisfaction. Only Virginia was silent and indifferent, and wearied with the prolongation of the meal. What did she care about events happening thousands of miles away, when her own life was drifting to a hateful consummation?

After the condition of Boston had been as thoroughly considered as Batavius was willing to supply material for, there was a pause of nervous length, and then Rutgers asked, "Were you in Glasgow, Captain?"

"Yes," he answered. "I went to Glasgow, as I usually do."

"And how did you find affairs there?"

"I found affairs there as miserable as a lot of bad-tempered Scotchmen could make them. Since then I have reflected on what I saw there, and I think the men of Glasgow will do a great deal towards the repeal of the Stamp Act. I do not say that I approve of their ways, I speak only of evident results."

Harry was delighted, and answered with great excitement, "My father holds the same opinion. He will be delighted to hear you second it, Captain."

"Well, then, I am wise, I reflect forward. I ask what does this mean? What does that mean? What must be the end of it? And I tell myself—Batavius, Scotchmen will tear their union with England to tatters, rather than do without their snuff. That is their business. It is of no interest to me. I am a Dutchman born in Amsterdam."

"My father thinks as you do, Captain."

"Then Colonel Rutgers has reflected also. Few men I have seen do that. They are led by their feelings, which are generally wrong."

"Then," said Virginia pointedly, "then, Captain, I hope you will not be led by your feelings."

"My dear Virginia, I was speaking of politics and business—these things should be ruled by reason. But when a man thinks of a woman, that is different, about a woman no man can reason. That is because she is to be judged by the soul! by the intellect!"

"Soul! Intellect!" and Virginia looked with wide open eyes of amazement at Batavius. It was as if she had told him plainly, you possess neither the one nor the other. He felt the thrust sent home with such a scornful glance, and shook himself impatiently; then he continued—

"I am a sailor, and trader, and a man of peace, and I dislike quarreling; and Glasgow is a quarrelsome city. A grievance of some kind it always has; but never have I seen it in such a blazing passion as it is about its snuff and tobacco. I tell you plainly, the men of Glasgow will be in London soon if their trade with America is not resumed."

"We have only to remember," said Harry Rutgers, "that three-fourths of all the tobacco imported into England goes to Glasgow. It is their great source of wealth."

"There it is. The Virginia merchants, or tobacco lords, dwell in splendid mansions, and live as if they were princes. Indeed that is the truth. I have been in Virginia Street, and seen them bullying and brow-beating their fellow-citizens. One side of the principal street in the city is given up to the tobacco lords, and they strut and swagger up and down there in long scarlet cloaks, full wigs, and cocked hats, while footmen, powdered and in full dress liveries, walk behind them. Very well; but this is not all of their

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state, for on the opposite side of the street the people of lower rank, who have business with them, humbly wait till they get the sign that they may approach and speak to their snuff and tobacco majesties. It is the truth I tell you, I have seen it with my own eyes."

"Well! I am astonished!" said Harry Rutgers. "I thought our New York merchants were princely enough."

"They are. Any one can see that, for dignity and respectability can not be concealed, but look now, even the De Lanceys are modest princes compared with the McDuffs, and other tobacco lords. And tobacco is not the whole of the count; the coarse cloth used for negro clothing is woven in Glasgow, and especially the many-colored checked handkerchiefs those black women wind about their heads. Whoever takes snuff, takes Scotch snuff; and when I was there, one thousand snuff-makers were idle. Maryland and Virginia owed Glasgow merchants half a million pounds, and they would not pay it; and they were holding their tobacco at home and sending no orders to Scotland. And only imagine it! I saw one gathering of these red-cheeked, red-bearded, angry men, and I think if the King could have heard them shout, 'Repeal the Stamp Act!' he would have done it instanter, without waiting for any parliament to help him. Sir, you could hear their roar from the Broomilaw to Dumbarton. I tell you what is true, for I respect the truth, and what the deuce is to hinder me confessing it? Whoever is good and respectable may say so," and Batavius lifted his glass of Hollands with a flourish, and drained it off with the air of one drinking to the honor and glory of Batavius De Vries. Virginia looked at him with eyes flashing contempt, Harry Rutgers, with amusement, and Captain Jan and Madame with real admiration. But before any expression could be given to these sentiments, their attention was arrested by the noise

of an approaching carriage, and the evident advent of some visitor.

The next moment the door was flung open by a servant in sky-blue livery, and Lady Rose Harley alighted in the middle of the company. "Alighted" is the word most capable of explaining her entrance, for only a bird darting from some hidden branch to the ground could express the miracle of her presence. One moment she was not there, and the next moment she was embracing Virginia, and radiating her beauty and influence on every one in the room. But it was to Captain Jan she addressed herself—

"I have come to show you my new frock, Captain," she said, as she stood before him, and spread out her hoop, and the lovely silks that shrouded it. "Is it not modesty itself? Notice the delicate browns, and the bodice in gold-colored damask, and the pipings of the same. And look at my bronzed shoes with gold buckles, to match my necklace and my bracelets. Could the Committee on Household Matters desire anything more unassuming? Confess, now, that my appearance is most properly bespeaking;" and she turned to Harry Rutgers, with a smile that would have wiled any man's heart from him, if it had not already been given away.

"My dear Lady Rose," said the Captain, "a man must make some new words if he would praise you right. Your dress suits you from head to feet. Just as the feathers of a little bird suit it, so your dress suits you. You could not add one feather, nor change one feather, nor take one feather away,—the little bird is dressed to perfection; that is the way with you."

Rose's face shone with pleasure. She turned to Harry Rutgers, and incidentally included Batavius in the recognition. "Take notice, young gentlemen," she said, "of a perfect compliment. None of you know in these days how

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to pay one, but Captain Jan can teach you." Then she looked from Madame to Batavius, and Madame understood, for Batavius was standing on the very tip-toes of expectation. Here was a real titled lady, and he was going to speak to her, perhaps even walk in the garden with her. Such an honor was beyond all dreams, yet it was coming, and he told himself Batavius De Vries must rise to the occasion.

Certainly he put on what he considered his best manner, and under Rose's encouragement he soon grew eloquent, and began to tell her about his adventures and investments, and as soon as he was sure of his ground, to freely express his opinions on the political crisis then crippling the city.

"New York is rich and discontented, as is her way," he said. "I have paid attention to her complaints, and having heard them often before, I know what to think of the grumbling in A. D. 1765."

"But New York is not rich now, Captain."

"My lady, the men are not working, and whoever will not work is poor, as a matter of course. And they are not particular in their principles, and must feel the chastisement of poverty. I am not opposed to that."

"Still men want their political rights, Captain."

"My lady, I am a sailor and a trader, born in Amsterdam, and on the sea we have whatever rights we wish to have. Rights! Of what use are they to a man in his business? I like to do my business with a person who pays his taxes to the government, and defends religion and morality. If a man has his good profits, they are his best rights. So far I go with everyone; beyond is work for rebels."

"You must try and convert Captain Van Vroom to your opinions; sir, they are so sensible."

"Shall I tell you, my lady, how matters stand? I am to marry Virginia in a few weeks, and then I shall speak to my father about his foolishness. When our interests are

the same, we shall think the same. This fact I have often observed, for I notice everything."

"Have you heard the rich house of Eastervelt has become bankrupt?"

"They are Lutherans. They have even a Roman Catholic bookkeeper. What can they expect?"

"The Governor declares them to be honest gentlemen. Trade now runs strange hazards. Every business house feels it."

"That is so, my lady. But you must not suppose Van Vroom and De Vries, 14 Wall Street, have nothing to do. At Walton's and Sagur's business is much slacker. I shall make some changes, if I stop here long. I can not have my business injured by other men's foolishness—and I will not."

"You will be stronger than the King of England!"

"He is crazy. When he signed the Stamp Act he was crazy. He wrote his name like a baby's scrawl. In Glasgow they were exhibiting the facsimile, and the very children laughed at it. For myself, I doubt if it was able to make the act legal."

"The poor King!"

"Yes, my lady, I am very sorry for him."

"I think Mr. Rutgers is going. I believe you go with him."

"I think I do. I might as well. I beg you to believe, Lady Harley, that this has been the very proudest day in my life."

"Except the day on which you were engaged to the lovely Virginia."

"Well, then, my lady, let me tell you, we have always been engaged. She said 'yes' when she could hardly lisp the word. It has always been 'yes' between us."

"Take care, lest 'no' should come—women are only women."

"When a woman has said 'yes' for sixteen years, she will not think of saying 'no.' That is not possible. Virginia will keep her word; of course she will keep it."

Harry and Virginia were by this time at their side, and Batavius bowed his adieus almost down to Rose's bronze slippers. And Virginia noticed how one of them was suddenly flung forward with all the passion of an undeveloped kick. In fact, the action was so impressive that Harry Rutgers glanced from Rose's foot to her face, and received in return a look from her wide open, angry eyes that fully explained the action.

"The compliment was not for me?" he asked.

"No," she answered sweetly; "it was for Captain De Vries; but alas! I fear he did not understand it"—and Batavius was so obtuse that all the way to Cherry Street he worried Harry to tell him what private signal of Lady Rose's favor he had missed. Finally Harry answered, "It is generally thought, Captain, that when a lady partially advances her hand, it is that you have permission to kiss it—a great favor I assure you, as ladies' favors go. I myself did not notice the advance, but then Lady Rose had been quite confidential with you for nearly an hour."

And all that night Batavius could think of nothing else, and dream of nothing else, but the lovely little hand that he might have kissed, and did not; though there would have been shadows in his thoughts and dreams if he could only have heard the following conversation between Virginia and Rose, as hand in hand they sauntered back to the house after the two men had departed.

"When did the creature get here, Virginia?"

"I found him sitting with father when I returned from the Waltons' and Midways'."

"Joris was with you?"

"Yes. I met him near the park. We walked home together."

"How long did he stay?"

"About an hour. He was getting angry at Batavius, and I thought he had better go."

"Harry was here at the same time?"

"Yes."

"And your father—three men present, and not one of them kicked the nasty little toad!"

"Batavius would not be easily kicked."

"I would kick him myself for a ha'penny."

"You very nearly did so, Rose, without a halfpenny."

And Rose laughed, and put out from beneath her dress the saucy-looking, high-heeled shoe with its gold buckles.

"I would never have worn it again if it had touched him," she said.

"And, oh, Rose! Rose! I am to marry him. I am broken-hearted."

"I swear by all the Harleys that ever lived and died, you shall not marry him. He is a nasty, damp, oily, puffed-up toad, and he may swell himself like the toad in the fable, till he bursts, but he shall never marry Virginia Van Vroom. Upon my honor, that would be something too abominable!"

"I am bound on every side. How can I prevent it?"

"Ways and means, dear, plenty of them. Ways and means, that Captain De Vries will never dream of. I declare this the most interesting thing that has happened since I came to America. If I prevent this marriage, will you do all I tell you?"

"Everything! Anything! Rose, can you really help me?"

"Yes. The creature is already at my beck. He was so excited at talking with a titled woman, he could not keep his lips dry. He called me with servile delight 'my lady'

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about two hundred times. He told me he was born in Amsterdam, and christened in the Oude Kirk, one hundred and fifty times; and that he was a sailor, and thought people who spoke against the government low fellows, at least one hundred times. He was in his kingdom, if I laughed at anything he said. He has damned himself in my opinion a thousand times; and oh, my darling Virginia, I would rather see you dead than the wife of that creature!"

"I would rather die than marry him."

"God's precious! You shall neither die nor marry him."

"I had forgotten—I did not dream the man was so hateful. It is nearly four years since I saw him, and I was not then fourteen; besides, there is Joris—I love Joris. How can I love Batavius?"

"To love such a man as Batavius is sin against nature."

"My father will make me marry him."

"Do you think I am going to see you buried alive in the arms of a man you detest, and who is fit only to be hated? I will not!"

And so with their anger, their youth, and their hope they went to Virginia's room, to consult on Rose's ways and means. And Rose's lucid, laughing decisiveness soon imparted confidence and encouragement to Virginia; she began to hope for escape from a fate so dreaded, and to be conscious of that sustaining Something which, in the darkest hour of calamity, whispers an assurance of "living happily ever after it."

CHAPTER SIX

THE PLOT AGAINST BATAVIUS

FULL of passionate and bewildering feeling, Joris stumbled upon the very occasion he had tried for weeks to avoid—an hour suitable for the presentation of his hopes with regard to Virginia. In the first place, in his desire to dine at the Van Vrooms' he had forgotten the Artavelde dinner hour, and his father's anger at any unpunctuality respecting it. And then as he neared his home, and did remember, a kind of obstinate defiance of all possible circumstances took possession of him. In a crisis so imperative, a certain reasonable impatience was natural, and he could have met his father's anger with dignified explanations if it had at once settled on Virginia; but passionate words about "cold soup," and "meat baked to a poultice," it was impossible, in his frame of mind, to justify.

"I am quite indifferent to the soup," he said with an air of contempt.

"I am not, and while you are in my house, remember, sir, that soup is served at half-past twelve."

"It seems the fact is important. I will try and remember it."

"Did you reach the fort with my letter to the Governor?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did he say?"

"Nothing at all, to me. He gave your letter to a secretary, and told him to read and report on it."

"But it was marked private."

"It was given to a confidential clerk, I suppose."

"You suppose! When I send you on an important message, I expect from you certain details as to how the message was received. The Governor must have looked pleased or displeased. His manner surely said something, if you had taken the trouble to observe it."

"The Governor's face was expressive of nothing but personal worry. I think it likely he regarded your letter as an addition to it."

"He asked after my health."

"No, sir. He made no inquiries at all about you."

"And pray then what did he say to you?"

"He hardly noticed me."

"What was the matter with the man?"

"Bad temper, I dare say. It seems prevalent this morning."

"And I would like to know what made you send *Corisande* home with Dan? Dan is unfit to trust with any decent horse. *Corisande* had been ridden hard."

"I am sorry for that. I will attend to Dan in a short time. I trusted *Corisande* to him, because I saw Miss Van Vroom on Broadway, and I wished to walk home with her."

"I'll be bound you did, if only because you knew I would rather you walked with any other she creature."

"I will trouble you, sir, to speak with respect of Miss Van Vroom. If her father permit me that honor, she has promised to be my wife."

"The old man will be only too glad to tag her on to a reputable family like the Artaveldts."

"I am quite sure he regards no family to be of greater importance than his own."

"Likely enough. He is an impudent old sea dog. Why should he object to you? Because you are an aristocrat—because you are my son—because you wear a sword——"

"Nonsense, sir! He has no particular objections to me,

except that I interfere with plans he has already formed for his daughter."

"And pray who may the favored party be—a De Lancey—a Walton—an English officer—prospective lord, or earl, or——?"

"Sir, you are turning into ridicule interests dear as life to me."

"Nothing seems incredible in the matrimonial line—for instance, Katherine Van Heemskirk and that dissipated Captain Hyde."

"Katherine is an innocent little child. She is a favorite of Captain Hyde's aunt, Mrs. Gordon."

"And a favorite of Mrs. Gordon's nephew, Captain Hyde, also—a man who is a living lesson of everything one would not wish to be."

"Sir, Captain Hyde has many noble qualities."

"And is nephew to a noble earl."

"He is not in our set, we really know nothing about him."

"Not in our set! There is no better set. The only title to superiority over us these English officers can have is their impudence to presume it. But all this is by the bye. Can you tell me the name of your rival?"

"Sir, I wish I could do so without shame, for if a soldier desires a foeman worthy of his sword, a lover—if he must have a rival—wishes it to be a man worthy of the woman he loves, as well as of his own honor. I can not believe Captain De Vries is either."

Justice Artaveldt laughed complacently as he asked, "Do you mean Captain Batavius De Vries?"

"Yes, sir."

"I know the man. Well, Joris, he is not a bad selection. Batavius is a fine sailor, a ready fighter, not to be beat at a trade, and, as he is never weary of telling us, a great

admirer of morality and respectability—the latter qualities kept for use on shore. He was brought up by Van Vroom on his own ship, and he is now his partner in business. The man is fairly rich, and not very repulsive looking; most women would consider him eligible.”

“Virginia detests the fellow, yet her father is determined to marry her to him, on or before the feast of Saint Nicholas.”

“Will he succeed?”

“She loves me, and has a will, not theirs. She will persist in refusing him, and be encouraged in her determination by her friend, Lady Rose Harley.”

“There was your chance, Joris. If you had only given me Lady Rose for a daughter, I should indeed have been a proud and happy father.”

“Sir, Lady Rose has her own fancies and ideas. I do not come into them.”

“And as to Batavius, he is well enough—bluff and sailor-like, he makes no pretenses; he stands for what he is.”

“I liked him not, and he liked me not. I am sure when he said he was glad to meet me, he wished me at the devil. He is a mean, precise, cunning creature; a swaggering puppy, a conceited boaster, who tells his dreams for current truth. So far I read him during the short time I wasted in his company.”

“Let all that pass. By hook or crook, with or without a consent, do you intend to marry Miss Van Vroom? Or do you intend to let this mean, precise, cunning, swaggering, conceited boaster set you aside, and carry off the girl in your sight?”

“I am going to marry Virginia if by any human means I can compass it. I have no fear that if I fail Batavius will succeed. Virginia is not a woman to be influenced by a creature like Batavius De Vries.”

"I am glad to hear it. I should not like my son to be plucked by Batavius De Vries—far from it. I have plumed myself, Joris, no little on your courage and good fortune, and I tell you point blank, if you let De Vries carry off the bride you desire, I shall think next to nothing of you. Now I will speak about an affair of my own—within a few months the Widow Eastman will become Madame Artaveldt."

And without a moment's hesitation Joris answered with evident pleasure, "I am glad to hear it, sir."

"Had you chosen a wife agreeable to my wishes, I should not have married again."

"But why not marry, sir? You are yet in the prime of your life, and I must away into the world to seek my fortune. Why for any one's sake deprive yourself of a good wife and a happy home? I have often seen Mrs. Eastman; she is handsome, and I am sure she is good-natured and sweet-tempered. I wish you every happiness, father."

"I consider myself fortunate, Joris, and I am pleased with your sympathy. As to the future, be content to leave it for a time. The luck and love that is for you will come to you, and if Virginia Van Vroom is your fate, I do not feel inclined to hinder destiny. Whoever does so, turns his way into a cross," and Justice Artaveldt crossed his forefingers significantly; "always I have seen that lives so blundered and miscarried mean crucifixion of some kind. In a few days I will be ready to talk with you about your plans, and to give you such help as I can give, and until then, we will make believe that the old life is to go on forever;" and bowing to his son he silently drank his glass of Madeira and left the room.

So the threatened storm blew over, and left the heaven of his hopes so far clear-skyed that he knew that such ill fortune as he was destined to meet with regard to Virginia must

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now come either from her own timidity and scrupulous sense of her father's authority, or else from that authority itself. He was not inclined to seek further revelations that day. He felt that he must give Virginia time to realize her position, and as he knew she was expecting Rose, he confidently anticipated startling results of some kind.

"As soon as Rose sees him, she will hate him," he thought. "She will play with him as a cat plays with a mouse, and if he remains in her company one half-hour, and is allowed to talk, he will in that half-hour lay up memories of contumely and loathing, not to be satisfied except by some long act of extraordinary and vindictive punishment." And somehow, though he did not doubt Virginia's faithfulness, he felt surer of it because he knew Rose would be on his side; for he had frequently seen that whatever Rose thought, Virginia thought also; and that whatever Rose proposed was sooner or later accepted by Virginia as ultimate wisdom.

This afternoon the two girls had indeed more than enough material for their consideration. First of all, Rose desired Virginia's unqualified dismissal of De Vries' pretensions.

"You hate him, Virginia," she said, "of course you hate him."

"When he talks of marriage, I hate him, Rose."

"Could you possibly, under any circumstances, be the wife of that creature? Of course, you could not."

"I have only to think of Joris, then I feel that I would rather die than be the wife of Batavius."

"The wife of Batavius! What an awful idea! It makes me shiver from head to feet. But then, I shall never suffer such a sin against nature."

"How can you help it, Rose? What will you do to get rid of him?"

"Anything, short of detectable murder."

"We must not break a commandment."

"If we have to, we will look it full in the face, and break it squarely; we will not crack, and chip, and chisel it away. But pray, my dear, do not look so uneasy. Sure, there is a much simpler plan. I was busy thinking it out, as the swelling little toad was talking to me, for I am particular myself about the commandments. However, I do not believe kidnaping is among them, is it?"

"Kidnaping! No! No! There is nothing said about kidnaping in the commandments. But what had that to do with Batavius?"

"Nothing at present; but in the future, Batavius will find out. I have often heard my father say, all privateers ought to be forced into the King's service. I believe Batavius is a privateer, or something of the kind."

"Both Arent and Batavius might be called privateers."

"Virginia! How can you take the two names into your mouth at the same time? Arent is of the noblest race of men, and to couple his name with that of the other man is an unclean insult. It shocks me."

"I never thought of it in that light. Arent has known—the other man—all his life."

"Poor Arent! How has he endured the trial? But it will soon be a thing past and forgotten."

"Oh, Rose, I see not!"

"Oh, Virginia! Upon my word I see clearly. The dear King is in urgent need of good sailors and fighters, and it is only just Batavius should do him some service. He told me, over and over, he was for the King and the government, and hated the low fellows against them. Very proper in Batavius, and equally proper that he should make good his words with his seacraft and his cutlass. I am going to make him do his duty."

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"You are surely talking in your sleep, Rose."

"Do not dream of such an explanation. I am in square earnest. It confounds me that a creature so suitable for a man-of-war has not been carried off by the press-gang years ago. How in the name of wonder he has sneaked out of his duty so long is a marvel."

"But, Rose, is it his duty? Batavius is a Dutchman."

"Great Heavens! Has he not told me he was a Dutchman, born in Amsterdam, about a thousand times? That does not alter the matter. Every man sailing under the English flag—and his ship flies it on occasions—owes the poor dear King his service. Batavius is going to be kidnaped. Lord, Virginia! the thought is like wine. He has gone his selfish way of 'round the world and home again' quite long enough; it is high time he made himself useful. And really, he is now specially needed in the Indian seas. He told me he knew every wind that blew on them. Yet he is idling at anchor in New York Bay, when the dear King is pushed to the wall for men that know about India and the Indian seas. I can tell you, my father will snap up Batavius as if he was a heavenly miracle for emergencies; nor will he mind, if he thinks the miracle came from quite an opposite direction. I verily believe no woman ever had a more befitting thought. I wonder myself what quarter it came from—but that is of no consequence; the great point is, that Batavius is going to be kidnaped."

There was a minute's silence, and then Virginia looked at her friend and smiled. "How are you going to manage it, Rose?" she asked.

"The kidnaping is positive, Virginia; the precise ways and means not yet decided on. But I shall go to my father to-morrow and arrange the smallest details. Colonel Gordon with his wife and an escort of twenty men leave New York for Boston in the morning. I am going with them."

"Perhaps they went this morning. I saw nothing of them when Joris and I spoke to Mrs. Semple."

"Oh, you inventor of mischances! As I passed the Semples' this afternoon I saw Katherine Van Heemskirk and Captain Hyde sitting in the garden; from which fact I deduce Mrs. Gordon's presence somewhere near them."

Again Virginia looked doubtful, and Rose said a little wearily, "Upon my word, it confounds me!"

"What confounds you, dear Rose?"

"Your apathy. If I was in your case, I would not believe a thing could go against me—even if it was against me. You must trust me, Virginia. I swear I will not fail you."

"Suppose you go to Boston to-morrow?"

"Yes?"

"When will you get back?"

"As soon as I find proper escort. Father will manage that. I may be two, even three, weeks away."

"And during that time, what shall I do?"

"Be true to yourself, and Joris."

"Suppose father should insist upon my marriage while you are away? It would be like him—it would indeed, Rose."

"Poor dear! Give me a kiss, and then remember how many invincible weapons are in your possession. You can be sick, awfully sick. You can cry. You can coax, and smile, and beg for a little more time. You have the inviolable right to set the wedding day, and you can set it on the feast of Saint Nicholas. You can keep your wedding dress unfinished. In faith, Virginia, you can break your arm or your leg, if it is necessary. I could find a new excuse every morning, and every night I should have a fever."

"They would bring a doctor."

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"Let them; ask for a doctor; insist on having a doctor, and if you will only look as sweet and sorrowful as you are looking now, you can make him your confederate."

"You leave me a hard part to play. I could do it with your help; alone I fear for myself. I never could get the better of father—mother never could."

"Oh, indeed, you are mistaken. Your mother never fails to overcome. If you find you must have help, then trust to your mother. Captain Jan will be vanquished, as soon as you two sit down before him. All I ask is, that by any and all means you put off the wedding day until Christmas. I shall be in New York long before that date, but I like big margins, don't you?"

Virginia said "yes," but said it so mechanically that Rose looked at her sharply, and her next question was one with no second thought behind it.

"Are you in earnest about this matter, Virginia? For God's sake, speak sincerely. For if it be in the power of man or woman to make you marry that creature, say so. You can easily go mad, and do it without my help. Good Heavens! how indifferent you are, while I have such a sense of your misfortune that I am all haste and distraction."

"Dear Rose, if my heart you could see! But look now, this is the way—whatever you do, you do with rush and power, and you have no other thought. That is your nature. I come more slowly, but quite as surely, to the same point as you. All afternoon my heart has been growing hotter and hotter, yet a faintness and fear made me dumb, when I wished most of all to speak. But I would think very ill of myself if I was willing to let you go to Boston on my affairs, and was not sure, and doubly sure, that I wished it. Yes, indeed, most grateful am I to you. For I would die rather than deceive Joris, and be the wife

of Batavius. Then also, your way of getting rid of Batavius was frightsome to me. You know what New Yorkers think of impressing a man. I did not see how you could do it, I felt sure failure would mean intolerable shame, and perhaps punishment, for us. My heart was heavy with thoughts and plans, and this one of yours struck like lightning among them, and stunned and blinded me."

Then Rose drew the fair face, wet with tears, to her own, and kissed it tenderly. "I understand," she said, "we can trust each other."

"Let me confess my whole heart to you, Rose. I would not willingly do Batavius any great injury, for while I abhor the idea of him as my husband, and think, as you said, any means short of murder——"

"I said detectable murder, my dear. That is a little stronger."

"Short of detectable murder might be excused, to rid myself of so great a life-long horror, still I remember that my father loves Batavius, my mother also, and Arent——"

"I told you not to name Arent with him."

"I, also, when a baby, sat on his knee, and liked the toys and sweetmeats he brought me; and as a school girl I was proud of the jewels and perfumes and pretty things he never forgot. In those days when father spoke of our marriage, it meant nothing unpleasant to me; the man had made no impression on me, only as a gift-bringer."

"And then you became a woman, and Joris interfered?"

"And I love Joris, and have given him a promise. And after that, talk about my marriage grew more dreadful every day, and when he came this time I saw so quickly the faults I never noticed as a child. Oh, I turned sick the moment I looked at him!"

"No wonder, he is intolerably ugly."

"But for all that, one should not forget past kindness."

"I vow, the gifts he brought you were only the baits of a fisherman. He was determined to catch you, when you were grown big enough. My father told me never to take gifts; he said four-fourths of giving was fishing."

"Let the past go. I only want, for father's sake, that Batavius may suffer nothing except the loss of me."

"You are a darling, and for your sake we will ask some favors for the little toad. But indeed, Virginia, the thing I am going to do may prove to be great good fortune for him. A commission in his Majesty's service will be easily within his reach, for he will certainly be sent to Bengal."

"Why to Bengal?"

"To help Lord Clive—the little Great Mogul—compel the real Great Mogul to surrender the whole Empire of Bengal to England. England wants it, and Lord Clive has promised it to the dear King for his next birthday gift."

"Do you believe the King will get it? I don't."

"I'll stake my word on it."

"Rose, I am now satisfied. Tell me what to do, and I will obey you in all things."

"There is only one thing positive, and beyond all shadow of doubt; that is, the secrecy to be preserved about the fate of Batavius. Neither by word, look, nor sign of any kind must our interference be revealed."

"I promise you perfect silence."

"I vow you the same promise. Now I shall go and see Mrs. Gordon, and I may drink tea with her; for Batavius might return, and I do not feel myself able to endure a second sight of the creature to-day."

Batavius did not return. He found excellent business to be done with Colonel Rutgers, and was busy on *The Arms of Stuyvesant* all through the small hours of the night. Captain Van Vroom was evidently aware of the detention and

its cause, for his words of approval were neither few nor cold—

“You can not show me another man so clever in business as our Batavius,” he said proudly to Madame, as he sat eating his waffles and drinking tea.

“Ah, then, Jan!” she answered, “he comes to us always with his best side foremost.”

“I say it, and I will maintain it.”

“No one contradicts thee, Jan.”

“It is an undoubted matter. All the best business men speak of Batavius.”

“And some speak ill, quietly. I have heard words not respectable—words like contraband—and——”

“Katrina, a close mouth is a wise mouth,” interrupted Jan. “There is so much *not* to say, Katrina. And here is our Virginia, silent as a little mouse. What is thy wish, dear one? Another waffle? Here come some hot from the irons.”

“I care not for them, father.”

“Why art thou so still and cross? Will nothing please thee?”

“I am tired. My heart aches. I want to sleep. Perhaps I might have a good dream.”

“A good dream! Why talk of that, when so many real good things are at thy hands and feet—money, jewels, fine clothing——”

“I can not wear fine clothing.”

“Not just now, but in a short time it may be worn, and thy good mother, and father, and brother, and thy friend Lady Rose, and thy lover, and the handsome house he is going to give thee. Both thy hands are full of blessings. If the good God should tell thee to ask Him for all thy heart wants, thou could not, for shame, ask for a tenth of what He has already given thee. So ungrateful art thou! It is

very wicked to be so ungrateful! Smile, and talk to thy father and mother, and be glad in thy heart."

Madame looked at her daughter and moved the tea things about like a woman who wishes them to speak for her, but she did not continue the reproach in words. She saw it was useless. The air of revolt on Virginia's face was too positive, and an unhappy silence settled over the tea table. Virginia did not speak, and her face showed no signs of anger, but in the atmosphere with which she surrounded herself, smiles withered on the lips, love became dumb, hope hopeless, and life nothing but bare breathing. Ah, yes, the soul casts shadows, as well as the body!

Madame soon felt, and resented the deadening influence. She rose in angry haste, saying, "Good food eaten in bad temper makes both body and soul sick;" and as she put away the silver and sweetmeats she accompanied her work with a little broken monologue about "sulky people" and "girls who did not know when they were well off." At length she went to the slave quarter, and left the father and daughter together—Jan nervously trying to fill his pipe, Virginia standing at the bow window apparently gazing into the garden, but really trying to persuade herself to go with a kiss to her father and make all right between them.

Ere she could do so he called her.

"Virginia, my little child, come here to me." Then she went hastily, and drew a stool to his side, and sat down at his knee, and looked into his face with a smile just dashed with tears.

"What is it?" he asked. "What troubles thee? Speak to me the truth. Eh? Tell thy father, who loves thee so much."

"It is Batavius. I do not wish to marry him. He called me 'his Virginia.' He spoke as if I had promised to be his

wife. I have not promised Batavius. I will not marry him. Father, tell him what I say."

"Not that! Not that! I would cut out my tongue first. I promised him thou should be his wife. For many years I have made him this promise. Not even for thee will I forswear myself. Thou must marry him. It is a happy fortune for thee. He is a good man, and——"

"For God's sake do not tell me again that he is moral, and respectable, and rich, and knows how to make money. I care for none of these things. The man is horrible."

"See now, I will not let thee speak of my friend and partner in such words. No, I will not. And he is to be thy husband."

"In God's name! No! I will never marry him."

"Betsy Roosenveldt said the same thing. With cries and stamping feet she said, 'I will never marry Cornelius Hesse.' Now she has four pretty little children, and Cornelius Hesse is their father. Moreover, for Betsy Hesse the sun rises and sets in her Cornelius, and she thinks no man in the world good enough to lace his big boots."

"Betsy was always a silly creature. I am not Betsy Roosenveldt."

"Her way was a woman's way. Why at first do they not tell the truth?"

"Was it my mother's way with thee?"

"Thy mother is a woman by herself. If worthy of her, thou would put thy own foolish wishes out of thy mind, and make those who love thee happy."

"Batavius makes me sick. If he but touches my hand, I shudder. I will die rather than marry him. I will not marry him."

Then Van Vroom stood up, and looked down upon the shrinking, sobbing girl, with anger at its dourest point.

"Thou shalt surely marry Batavius," he said. "I will

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have the banns published in the kirk, and give thy betrothal feast before the members of the great Assembly go back to their homes. Few of them have ever seen a Dutch festival, or been inside a Dutch home; and we will show them! Yes, indeed!"

"The banns, father! That is too cruel. How could I sit in the congregation and hear myself named with—that man! I could not. I should shriek and faint."

"Thou would not. I would see to that. I on one side of thee, Batavius on the other, we should carry thee out very quickly. And tell me, what would the women say? That thou did it for a scene—to show thyself off—to be specially noticed—such, and such like, would be the least of their kind speeches."

"Oh, I know! I know! But father—banns are now old fashioned. Why not a license from the Governor?"

"That is the truth. I will get a license, if it pleases thee better. Then thy wedding must come before the first of November, for, sure as I live! I will have no stamped-paper wedding in my family. Fix the day in this month—any day that pleases thee—and I will get a license."

"And sure as I live! I will not be married until Saint Nicholas Day."

He smiled at the quoting of his own oath, and laid his hand gently on Virginia's head. "Very well," he answered, "then it is the banns; for after November the first, no marriage without the stamped paper."

"Then how can the banns make marriage legal on the feast of Saint Nicholas?"

"In the kirk thou will be married by the law of God. There is no threepenny stamp on His service, yet—whatever there may be later."

"Fader! Fader dear! Pity thy Virginia! She does not wish to marry any one. Let her stay with thee."

"Some day I shall go away from my Virginia—away forever. Then, if before that day I have married thee to a good husband, I shall go with an easy heart. See now, it is my love for thee, only my love for thee."

"Choose some other good man, father. I hate Batavius."

"Peace! I will choose no other than Batavius."

"I will not marry him. I will not. That, I promise thee."

"Nothing care I for a mouthful of woman's words. Nothing at all. I will go away from thee now. A cruel daughter thou art; but so, even against thy will, I must still be kind to thee. When four years old, thou came near to death, a great sickness was on thee, and thy medicine, no one could make thee take it. Then I opened thy mouth, and held tight thy nostrils, and made thee swallow it; and so thy life was saved. Now, it is 'I will not take Batavius,' but he is for thy life's welfare, and I shall find means to make thee take Batavius."

"Not till the world ends."

"On, or before, the feast of Saint Nicholas."

Then Virginia burst into hysterical laughter, and the Captain was so distressed and annoyed that he went out to the stables, and in his haste to escape, forgot both his outer coat and the beaver cap for his head. Madame heard the heavy door clash, and as soon as she noticed her husband's absence she noticed also that he had gone into the night air without protection from its cold, damp wind. She looked reproachfully at Virginia, sent the coat and hat to her husband, and then said in a hard, tense voice—

"I am ashamed of thee. Everything that a reasonable woman could desire is at thy feet; but because of a lanky boy with a sword at his side, thou would kick thy own happiness to the Back of Beyond. A selfish daughter I have nursed at my breast."

"Mother, you married the man you loved. Only the same right I want."

"About my love, and my marriage, nothing is known to thee, nor even to thy father. Learn this, every heart has a closed room, and always there is some tragedy of love locked up in it. Thy father is planning for the happiness of thy whole life, and for my part, I do not wish to see all his hopes destroyed by a lovesick boy, like Joris Artaveldt."

Virginia cried out at the name, and Madame continued, "There are few girls in New York who would not gladly be in thy place. I can tell thee Joanna Van Heemskirk would. I saw her yesterday watching for Batavius, and he stood twice at their gate talking to her. But the secret of thy disobedience is, as I said, Joris Artaveldt; and pray just tell me, how is he to give thee a house and a living?"

"His father——"

"His father! His father is going to marry Mrs. Eastman. Every one but Joris has seen that, this long time past. Many brothers and sisters Joris may yet have to share with him whatever the Justice owns—often have I heard that it is not nearly so much as is generally supposed. He is an extravagant liver, and his son——"

"Mother, I am sick and tired. Tell Rose, when she returns, I have gone to bed."

"That is well. Thy father can come then to his warm fireside. A sad thing it is for a good father to be driven from it by an ungrateful, unloving daughter. And pray, what for did my Lady Rose go to the Semples' to drink tea?"

"Partly to keep out of the way of Batavius, but principally to find out at what hour to-morrow Mrs. Gordon starts for Boston. Rose is going with her; she wishes to see her father."

"It were better if she stayed with him. The Coldens

can do nothing with her, and it is in my opinion very improper for a lady of high birth to amuse herself with every handsome sailor that comes her way."

"Mother, how can you slander Rose so unjustly? you who know her so well."

"For that reason, I say she amuses herself with handsome sailors. I have seen her. First, it was Arent; now it is Batavius——"

"Arent is as handsome and as fine a gentleman as sails the ocean. He is her equal. As for Batavius, she loathed him as soon as she saw him. He is ugly as a toad, and has not one manly instinct."

"Now then, be quiet. Thou hast said more than enough. Go to thy own room. I want thy father to come into the house."

So Virginia, with an unaccepted good-night on her lips, went to her room, and in an hour's time Rose joined her there. She found her friend in a more angry and determined mood than she believed possible to Virginia; but the girl had been slowly nursing her anger into a passionate sense of resentment against her father's tyranny and her mother's sympathy with it.

"Already Rose," she said, "there have risen difficulties, that neither of us thought of," and she slowly explained the subject of the marriage banns and the betrothal feast.

Rose put both difficulties contemptuously aside. "Virginia," she answered, "all you have to do is to stubbornly stick to your assertion, that you will not marry any one—not even the handsome George, Prince of Wales, or the still handsomer George, heir of Artaveldt—until Christmas. Betrothal is not marriage; it is only a promise of marriage. What are women's promises worth? From the beginning of the world, men have laughed at them, told us they were lighter than air—not worth the breath we spoke them with

—and vowed it were easier to tie cobwebs than bind a woman with her own words. Prove it so. If it helps your plans, deny all you want to deny. As for the Domine calling your names together in the kirk, he will only be doing what all your friends and acquaintances have already done, whenever it so pleased them. Let them bann and betroth you as much as they like; but while the world stands, and you are in it, or on it, let no one marry you until I return.”

“You would have me go to the kirk, and sitting beside Batavius, hear my marriage with him announced to the whole congregation? How could I bear it, Rose?”

“It will not kill you.”

“Very nearly it will kill me.”

“No, you are made of better stuff. You will smile a scornful negative, and tell your heart not to hurry, or worry itself; that every word is a lie. There is another thing—your father can not publish your banns until you are betrothed; so then the betrothal feast must come before the kirk affair.”

“I never thought of that.”

“And you can fight for every day before the feast, and even if it comes to that huge merry-making, you can throw doubt and cold water on all congratulations,—vow you are ‘very indifferent,’ and that you ‘comfort yourself with the thought that there is many a slip between the cup and the lip,’—and so on. Oh, you foolish one! such a feast would give me a most delightful opportunity to snub the bridegroom, and bamboozle the company. Faith, not one of them would know the meaning of it all!”

“And the banns?”

“I should be sick every Sunday; but surely I will be back before that face-confounding ceremony.”

“Do you go to-morrow?”

“At ten o’clock in the morning.”

"Mother told me to-night that Justice Artaveldt is to be married soon. Joris will have a step-mother."

"Good for him! If his step-mother pitches him into the world, she will do him a kindness."

"He has been in the world, Rose—in two wars."

"My dear, do you call Canada the world? It is a wilderness with little settlements of French peasants and Scotch gentlemen—the latter exiles, because they could fight, but could not conquer, for Prince Charlie. A poor world, Virginia! A poor world! Joris must go to England—or to India."

"This evening he did not call."

"How unreasonable you are to expect it. I am reminded now of another trial you may have to meet. I think your father will forbid him to call at all. In Captain Jan's place, I should."

In fact, this was exactly the position taken by the Captain, and Rose had hardly started on her journey when the opportunity for such an order came. He was standing at his garden gate, and saw the young man approaching him. In a moment he realized what he believed to be his duty, and he did not hesitate in its performance.

Joris came pleasantly forward, and offered his hand with a smiling "Good-morning, Captain."

"Good-morning, Joris. Come into my garden one ten minutes. I want to talk with thee." Then without preliminary, or conventional platitudes, he said bluntly, "I do not wish thee, Joris, to come to my house again—not for a little time—not until Virginia is married."

"Sir, I love Virginia as my own soul. I can not keep away from her."

"It is *must*, not can, or can not, in this case. My mind is made up to marry my daughter to Captain De Vries."

"No! no, sir! That is impossible."

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"See here, now—talk with some good sense, or go away. Virginia is to be the wife of De Vries before Saint Nicholas' feast. Now, then, treat her intended husband as thou would like De Vries to treat thee, if in his place."

"*His* place! No, it is *my* place. Virginia has promised to marry me, and only me. I trust her promise. I will not give it up."

"And who gave to a girl of eighteen the power to make such a promise? And why, when it was made, did thou not come to me, and speak out at once. I will tell thee—because an underhand, blackguardly thing thou wert doing."

"Sir, I am at least a gentleman."

"A poor kind, I think. Thou had no right in my house, wooing my daughter without my permission. So much thou knew. A great fault thou hast led her into, for since ever she was six years old, Virginia has known she was to be the wife of Captain De Vries."

"A child's promise is nothing. I hold her woman-love-vow. She will keep it—in spite of all extremities."

"She will not. She shall not. If unreasonably thou wilt talk, then I am forced to talk roughly. Go thine own way, and come not into my daughter's way. I forbid thee to speak to her in my house, or out of my house."

"As I intend to marry Virginia, I can not obey your order, Captain."

"Tell me how can thou keep a wife? What house hast thou for her? What business to make moneys? No, I will not ask such questions. Only a boy art thou yet. Go away before we come to worse words,—we have been good company together,—I have liked thee very well,—but now thou must stay away from my house and my daughter. Mind what I say to thee."

"I shall see Virginia, somewhere, sir. I will speak to her wherever I see her."

"All that I wish to say to thee, is said," and he civilly touched his beaver cap with his right hand, and went into the house, shutting the door very decidedly behind him, though Joris was almost on the threshold.

Almost blind with grief and passion, the young man stumbled through the gateway. His nature bled on every side of it. He felt that he had been brutally assailed, and there was even a measure of astonishment in his grief. Every hope seemed to have so suddenly failed him, and about the sorrows of youth there is a terrible finality—the end of life is not more tragic than the end of love. For a few minutes he had something of the awful experience of a lost soul; he knew not which way to turn for comfort or help.

Then he remembered Lady Rose. She would certainly be on his side, so he went home and wrote her a letter; but as he did not know that Rose had gone to Boston, he sent it to the fort. There remained some days before the Governor forwarded it; and naturally he waited in vain for an answer. And oh, the misgivings of love! Who can control them? He feared, he hoped, he doubted, he had but one thought,—the constancy of Virginia,—but he turned that thought a thousand ways, and so suffered all the passionate aches, and fears, and jealousies of a love not sure. He watched the Van Vroom house, and wandered in all the city streets Virginia had been accustomed to visit, but for nearly a week all his efforts ended in despairing disappointment.

Then suddenly one afternoon little Katherine Van Heemskirk came to his aid. He met her going up Broadway with a letter in her hand, and instantly hope's encouraging whisper thrilled his heart.

"Katherine," he said, "you are going my way. May I walk with you?"

"To see Madame Van Vroom I am going," she answered, "and with me thou may walk, Lieutenant."

"Listen to me, Katherine, I am in trouble. Do you know Virginia Van Vroom? Will you see her this afternoon?"

"My friend Virginia? Very likely I shall see her."

"I love her so much, Katherine. My heart is breaking to speak to her. Can you imagine how I suffer?"

She looked sadly into his face, and gently nodded her head, but she did not speak.

"I want to see her once more—if it be only to bid her farewell forever. You understand, Katherine?"

Again she answered with a nod, but she also lifted to Joris beautiful eyes, full of warm, intelligent sympathy.

"If you had a lover you were never to see again, would you not long to bid him good-by?"

"Yes," she whispered, "thou art right. If no farewell was said, the heart would break."

"Virginia loves me, Katherine, just as I love her, but Captain Von Vroom is going to force her to marry Batavius De Vries."

"*Him!* A very disagreeable man he is. To my sister Joanna he makes love; bear him, I can not."

"I have a letter, Katherine. I have been watching many days to find some one who will give it to Virginia. Can you?"

Without a word she held out her hand for the letter, and then slipped it beneath her bodice.

"Let no one else see it, Katherine."

"Virginia only."

"She may give you a letter for me."

"Perhaps, for some white wool I am going. If Madame can give it to me, a little wait there may be; if not——"

"If not, Katherine?"

"I will say to Madame, can I see Virginia? And perhaps she will tell me, go and find her in the garden, or in her room, then——"

"Then, Katherine?"

"Then I will whisper, 'Virginia, Lieutenant Artaveldt breaks his heart to see thee, to speak to thee, he sends thee this letter; a few words of love thou must send back to him.'"

"You sweet comforter! Here I will wait for you, for if I go further I might be seen from the Van Vroom house."

In about half an hour he saw Katherine returning. Batavius, carrying a small parcel of wool, walked ostentatiously at her side, and when they overtook Joris, Batavius with an offensive leer said, "Good-day to you, sir. I have forgotten your name, though it is not my way to forget names, if they are of any importance."

Joris gave him a point blank angry stare, but answered him not in words.

"Sir, you have not any good manners, I think."

"If the young lady was not with you, I would——" and Joris put his hand on his sword, with a motion more significant than words.

"Oh! Oh! You would fight me. Good! Come to *The Arms of Stuyvesant* and on her deck I will lend you a cutlass."

"Captain De Vries," said Katherine angrily, "give to me my wool;" and having taken it from him, she stepped to the side of Joris and said—

"Lieutenant, kindly see me safe to my home."

"I myself will take you home, Katherine," said Batavius.

"No," she answered, "I will not be in thy quarrel. It is not proper."

So she gave Joris her hand, and they walked away to-

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gether, Batavius sending after them some mocking words, and a few loud guffaws. And when he returned to the Van Vroom house they were ready for tea, and as they drank it, Batavius made rude mirth over the temper of the rude Lieutenant, and his own offer of a cutlass on the deck of his ship, and of the womanly claim of Katherine on Joris; all of which incidents went like wine to the heart of Virginia. Her low laughter flooded her white face with a sudden glory, her eyes shone, and she said with an accent of delight—

“The dear child! So wisely, so properly she behaved. A little lady is Katherine; though her sister Joanna is beyond all belief plain and common.”

This opinion was hardly expressed ere it was followed by a shrill, longdrawn whistle, and a chanty-like cry. Captain Jansen leaped to his feet.

“It is Arent!” he cried.

“It is Arent!” echoed Virginia, also rising.

“It is my friend Arent!” added Batavius, with unctuous appropriation.

Madame, who had the sugar tongs in her hand, turned her face, shining with mother love, towards the door, and the next moment Arent threw it wide open, and with a following of fourteen Southern gentlemen, entered the room. Then the air vibrated with happy greetings and exclamations, and Arent explained that the visitors were “a few of the Southern members and sympathizers who had come to the Assembly on the *Manhattan*; and who wished to make Captain Van Vroom’s acquaintance.”

By this time Madame had half a dozen black women carrying her orders to the kitchen, and drawing out the long table, Virginia soon covered it with white damask, and set in order on it the best china and crystal, while Madame brought out all her treasures of condiments, jellies, cakes,

and other dainties. And as the Captain very quickly produced clay pipes and the finest Hollands, she felt sure that there was no special hurry; she could take time to place before the honorable strangers a meal worthy of them, and of her boy's happy return.

In fact, within ten minutes the men were in stern discussion of the Stamp Tax folly. They were noble men, well worth seeing and hearing—tall of stature, and full of the animal strength and courage and self-dependence of free men; large brained also, with something Scythian and restless about them—the element of moral and political impatience drawing them into fierce antagonism with those who would wrong them; men, taking them as a whole—

“Without reproach or blot,
Who did God's will and knew it not.”

And as the two proud, pleased women moved hither and thither about their hospitable duties, they listened; and when any specially forcible words were said, they looked at each other and smiled their approval. And though such conversations as the following may have lost salt and savor to the present generation, they were full of fascination and interest to Madame and Virginia—

“The English government,” said Aiken of South Carolina, “intendes to yoke the South as a laboring ox, and they will find they have roused a lion.”

“I think Mr. Pitt will yet save us from actual war”—this from an optimistic member of the party.

“God save us from those we trust in,” was Aiken's retort. “We do not know what ought to be—God alone knows that—but we do know, that our taxation, as it is at present, ought not to be; and with God's help we will save ourselves from its tyranny.”

“Right, Aiken!” said Worth of Maryland, in a voice

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of storm and thunder. "The time has not come, and it will never come, for us to make bricks in Egypt. Thank God we do not live when there is no vision in the land—no men to meet this emergency. If great and good deeds are to be done, our colonies are full of great and good men ready to do them." There was a proud general assent to this statement, and a chorus of questions and opinions, from which Virginia gathered the following—

"What is Lord Bute about? I do not understand his intentions."

"Where is the devil that can understand him?"

"He is a bad man."

"Bad to the backbone."

"You cannot touch his reason."

"No, he is to be knocked on the head."

"Before we finish this business, we shall have many casualties."

"We shall thrive by them."

"We might be driven by necessity to——"

"Necessity does everything well."

"The fact is," said Jeffries of Rhode Island, "England feels to us as a scholar feels towards Latin. However well he knows the language, it is not his mother tongue. However loyal we may be, we are only step-children."

"Step bairns!" laughed McLeod of South Carolina; "even sae, but we arena going to be mere buttons on the coat tails o' our rulers. If they will put us in such a humiliating position, we ha'e hands, and we ha'e swords, and we can use them. God kens, we wouldna be vera much fashed to cut oursel's loose. No, indeed!"

"Right, McLeod! Right!" and there was a storm of inarticulate sympathy and smiles, and glances so intelligent and eloquent that they actually seemed to radiate flame and feeling.

In less than an hour they sat down to a feast fit for a king. They had by this time talked themselves into a fever of passionate patriotism; their souls vibrated and urged each other; the atmosphere was charged as if with electricity; the spacious room felt as if it was on fire. Then for some hours they forgot they were mortal; the gods holding an Olympian Council could not have been less sensible of human limitations. Long before they left the Van Vroom house they felt quite able to cut themselves loose from the buttons of their rulers' coats, and McLeod, as he smoked and snuffed, chuckled merrily over "the puir German King, and the trouble he was helping to make for him."

"Prince Charlie may come to his ain yet," he mused, "and he might do waur than come here for it. This is a fair, broad kingdom, and if we could put Charlie in Geordie's chair, the clans would gather round him, and it would be a sort o' compensation for that black woe, Cul-loden."

He was so full of this impossible hope, that he went down to the City Hotel with the crowd humming "Wha wouldna fight for Charlie?" though the Liberty Boys escorting them marched to their own fine song of the Liberty Tree*—

From the east to the west blow the trumpet to arms,
Through the land let the sound of it flee;
Let the far and the near unite with a cheer
In defense of our Liberty Tree.

It was one of those hours in which mortals feel that they are immortal. The passionate evening, the ringing words of the song, the cheering of the boys and the citizens, opened for them some irrational doorway through which the

*By Thomas Paine, author of "The Age of Reason," *Pennsylvania Magazine*, July, 1765.

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mystery, the majesty, and the pang of life stole in, and thrilled them into an ecstasy of self-renunciation.

Only Batavius remained cool and prudent. He had eaten and talked and cheered with the rest, but as he walked alone to his ship he said to himself, with a scornful smile, "What fools these men are! They are full of complaints and threats. They are going to set the river on fire—Humbug! That is not my way. *I* complain of nothing. *I* accept everything. *I* will not prejudice my future by foolish scruples about liberty. On reflection *I* think the King is right. In the proper quarters *I* shall say so. Such men as *I* have just left will blow up a tempest. Well then, it would be a shame if Batavius De Vries had only one anchor to his opinions. A man of my experience understands such things."

And to thoughts of this tenor, he fell into that comfortable animal sleep which is neither troubled, nor comforted, nor informed by prophesying dreams.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ALL AT SIXES AND SEVENS

THIS first meeting of a Colonial Congress in the city of New York was an event of the greatest significance. The whole country was in an insurgent condition, and the government paralyzed by circumstances it had no authority to meet with that severe promptitude which appeared to be absolutely necessary. For Grenville, who was densely ignorant of American affairs, had appointed as collectors of the hateful tax only native Americans. He intended this as a conciliatory measure, but was amazed to find it universally regarded as insult added to injury.

"Is it not better the tax should be collected by Americans, rather than foreigners?" asked one who had just been duly qualified.

"No, vile miscreant!" was the answer. "If your father must die, is there no defect in filial duty if you become his executioner, in order to secure the hangman's fee. If the ruin of your country is decreed, can you innocently take part in the plunder?"

This was the feeling that leaped first into every heart; then they immediately began to ask one another, "Why should we allow a stamp officer on this side of the water at all?"

The answer to this question was startlingly quick, clear and unanimous. The effigy of Oliver, the collector for Massachusetts, was found swinging one morning from an elm tree at the entrance to Boston. Chief Justice Hutchinson ordered the Sheriff to remove it. He positively refused. It hung until evening, when a great multitude, marching in order and shouting "Liberty and No Stamps," took it

down and burnt it before Oliver's house. Hutchinson ordered the colonel of militia to beat an alarm. "My drummers are all in the mob," was the reply. Oliver resigned the following day.

The little turbulent colony of Rhode Island promptly raised a mob also, and the mob compelled the tax collector to resign. Maryland was in commotion, and her stamp collector fled to the fort at New York for refuge. The officer for Connecticut was following his example, when he was overtaken, escorted back to Hartford Court House, and ordered to read his recantation before the Assembly. Beyond Maryland the whole South passed resolutions to resist the Stamp Act. The last collector to yield was John Hughes of Philadelphia. He was desperately ill, but he heard muffled drums beating through the city, and the State House bells ringing muffled, and the tramp of men round his house demanding his resignation, and he gave them his written promise to have nothing to do with the stamp paper.

In the mean time, New York was watched with intense interest. It was not only the most important city on the continent, it was also the headquarters of the British army in America. Governor Colden was putting the fort in a state of offense and defense. Major James of the artillery was working day and night to increase his stock of powder, shot, and shells. It was said he had vowed "to cram the stamps down the throats of the people," and the people were watching with a grim determination that knew no fear. McEvers, the appointed stamp master for New York, was in hiding; and Colden had sent to General Gage for a military force sufficient to keep New York City in order. He was himself in a panic of fear, by every mail urging on the English government the immediate dispatch of the new governor to fill his place.

This was the condition of affairs in the city at the be-

ginning of October, A. D. 1765; and on the sixth of the month, all the members summoned for the first Colonial Congress had arrived. Just before this opportune moment a new paper appeared. It had not been advertised, no one knew who edited, or printed it; or who, with marvelous celerity, scattered it far and wide over the city and the surrounding country. It was called *The Constitutional Courant*, and bore the device of a snake cut into eight pieces, with the motto, "Join or Die." This motto became the watchword of the hour. It was on the lips of every one. The paper was in the hands of every one. The men who had supped with Jansen Van Vroom found it on their breakfast tables, and as they met, greeted each other with its motto. Jansen had it in his hand when he bid them good-morning. Batavius carried it with obvious ostentation. It was a cheap little thing to do for popularity, and not unsafe, for either curiosity or patriotism could explain his possession of it.

Yet he carried it in a nonchalant manner, and this manner for once explained his real feeling. At that hour he was very indifferent to every side of the political quarrel; he had spent some restless, unhappy hours during the night, having become conscious for the first time that he was really in love with Virginia. Hitherto, his admiration of the girl had been of that placid order which is bred of confidence and habit. He had so long regarded her as his own, so long been accustomed to take all the changes of her growth as proper and necessary, that he never suspected any personal reason for her cold reserve in his presence. He told himself it was the instinctive mood of a woman eighteen years old, just as her former freedom was the natural manner of a girl of fourteen.

But on the previous evening he had seen a different Virginia, and when he awoke from his first deep sleep, the vision of this other Virginia tormented him. Her rosy blush,

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her sparkling eyes, her light step, her gracious manner, her eager enthusiasms, patriotic anger and ready laughter—why had she never shown him any of these enchanting moods? To strangers she had been far more sweet and beautiful than she had ever been to him. He recalled other occasions when she had treated him in the same way. And how wonderfully charming she was! He felt that he could never rest until Virginia smiled and beamed on him, as he had seen her smile and beam on Aiken and McLeod, and others of the party. The consuming fever of love and jealousy had seized him, he was compelled to rise and go to the deck of his ship, and there, in the light of the stars and the waning moon, to see things as he had never seen them before.

The first effect of this new manner of thought was in his dress. He twisted his black hair into a curl or two, he adorned his hands with rings, he fastened his collar with a diamond of great value and beauty, and added to his finest uniform that touch of brilliant scarlet in his silk waistband that was so popular among privateers and other seamen of more doubtful occupation. Captain Jansen noticed this change at once, and thought well of it.

“Good clothing, and a few ornaments, Batavius,” he said, “are often better than many words. I am an old man, but I am always noted for my white linen and fine broadcloth.”

“Well then, Captain, you have a wife and daughter to look after your linen and broadcloth.”

“That is the truth. Art thou going with me to the City Hall?”

“No. I trouble not myself about the City Hall. The talk that will be there, is none of my business. I am going to speak to Virginia. Her real mind, I want to know.”

“Trouble not thyself about her real mind. Dost thou think to reach any woman’s real mind? Say some loving words, and let her know I have set the twenty-eighth of this

month for her betrothal to thee. Tell her all our old friends, and some new ones, will be present as witnesses. A great feast, and a dance for the young people, we will have."

Batavius nodded his acquiescence, and turned hastily to the Van Vroom dwelling. It was yet early, but he had become so anxious, and so eager, that every moment dividing him from Virginia seemed fraught with danger to his hopes. In a hurry of passionate love he reached the house. So still it looked, so peaceful, so sentient of human occupation! The October wind rustled the fading leaves of the trees, and shook the last perfume from the flowers; and as he came near the door, he heard a melancholy voice droning a lullaby in the slaves' kitchen; but no other sounds broke the stillness of the place.

He found the main door closed, but saw the one opening into the vast kitchen ajar; so he concluded that Madame was busy there, and he entered it. Virginia was the occupant, and for a moment or two she was not aware of his intrusion. In those few moments he delighted himself with the sight of her beauty in such unusual surroundings—surroundings, however, which as a prospective husband and householder, appealed strongly to him. For this large room was devoted to all the finer kinds of domestic duties. On its white tables the best linen was ironed, and the wheat bread kneaded. The great racks fastened against the walls held the daily services of Delft ware and polished pewter. Utensils of bright brass or tin hung against the jambs of the big chimney, and on the white hearth a fire of hickory logs blazed and crackled.

The white floor was sprinkled with sea sand, and at a table in the center of the room Virginia stood making bread. Her arms were bare, her bright hair closely braided, her neck covered with a white muslin kerchief tucked tightly into the bodice of her gray dress. Round her were the

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plain and crinkled pans for the loaves, the flour, the butter and eggs, and caraway seeds for the one sweet loaf made at every baking. She was kneading the dough with slow, rhythmical motions, and Batavius had time to put the fair household picture into his heart ere she heard the slight movement which caused her to turn.

"My dear Virginia!" he said, advancing.

She looked curiously at his unusual splendor, and answered—

"*You!* I am busy, as may be seen. You will find mother in the next room."

"Well, then, it is not mother I want. Virginia, it is you, you only. I who have so many thoughts, have now only one thought. It is of you, Virginia. Last night, I gave myself to you again. I have lost many hours of my sleep thinking of you. This can not go on. So I have come to tell you how much I love you—yes, that is my way. I give all, or nothing."

"Give me nothing."

"To you I give everything, myself,"—and he involuntarily stretched himself to his utmost inch,—"*my money, my land, my ships, all I have I give to you, for you I love. I say this, and it is the truth.*"

"Batavius, as you may see, I am busy. The bread can not wait for words. I must get it into the pans. I have no time to listen to foolishness.

"Foolishness! We are to be man and wife."

"Never!"

"I say so. Your father and mother say so."

"I can not help what they say."

"Always I have thought of you as my wife."

"That is not my fault."

"Four years ago you kissed me."

"You say so. I remember it not."

"Kiss me once more."

"For the round world, I will not."

"When we are married, I shall not beg kisses from you. They will be my right—and my right I take, wherever it may be—man nor woman can hinder me; so when you are my wife——"

"*When*, yes, *when* I am your wife! God keep *when* between us forever!"

"During the feast of Saint Nicholas——"

"The day of Saint Nicholas will come, and go, and I shall not be your wife."

"Virginia, my Virginia, I want your love! That is my right. I want you to give it to me with smiles and kisses."

"Batavius, I could give you the world as easily. But if indeed I am loved by you——"

"Better than everything I love you."

"Better than yourself? I believe not that."

"There it is! Better than myself. Last night I lost all my good sleep thinking of you. Take my words for it."

"Very well. I will believe your words. Then go to my father, and say, 'Virginia does not love me. I can not make her my wife.'"

"Nothing of the kind will I do, or say. No, indeed! Look you, Miss, when I love you well enough to marry you, I love you better than myself. And a big fool is any man to love another better than himself. Give you up! Never! All such thoughts to the devil! And more, Miss, I advise you, Batavius De Vries advises you, to be less free with your contemptuous looks and words. I am not used to taking scorn from any one, and if I do take it, remember that it is a debt I am sure to pay with heavy interest."

"Ah! you threaten me. I fear you not!" and she laughed disdainfully, and threw the loaf into its pan with

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a passion that roused the little devil always crouching ready in the heart of Batavius. He seized her hand, and held it as in the grip of iron, while he raised his other hand as if ready to strike. She saw, and understood the movement; and with unspeakable contempt looked straight into his flaming black eyes.

"Strike!" she said. "A blow would be far more endurable than a kiss."

He trembled with the rage he durst not gratify. His face became deathly white. He could not utter the words his passion prompted, his tongue was palsied, his voice too thick and feeble for articulation. He was driven to action, in order to express his anger, and he struck the table such a powerful and vehement blow, as shattered the big opal in the ring he wore, almost to dust. For in his nervous pleading, he had turned the stone inward and so it had received the full force of his furious temper. Virginia pointed to the precious particles, and in a tone of mockery and triumph said—

"It was your luck stone. You told me so. Well then, your luck is shattered and gone. No Jew in New York would bid on it now. Good-morning, Mr. Batavius."

So speaking, she left him standing in speechless consternation, looking at the broken gem which had been at once his favorite ornament, and his invincible charm. For he knew, what Virginia did not know, that he had been accustomed to rub it—as Aladdin rubbed his lamp—when ever he was about any business affecting his desires or his interests; and it had never before failed him.

This uncanny accident to his *familiar* terrified and stunned him. He was so dismayed by the deed he had done that he suffered Virginia to leave the room, and was hardly conscious of her departure. Slowly and remorsefully he gathered the minute remains, folding them in an I. O. U.

of great value; the only available bit of paper he had in his purse. But all the glory of the once fiery, iridescent stone was gone; and the dust of it was gray and dull and dead as ashes. Perhaps for the first time in all his manhood he felt that hot, blinding flood of tears which rushes from the heart to the eyes.

"And all this misfortune and misery for that girl!" he whispered. "Nothing shall now make me give her up. I will force the old man to his promise. She must be mine, my own, to take my will with. And she shall pay me for every insolent look and saucy word. Power of God, I swear it!"

He went away without another word, and no one stayed him. It was an unintentioned neglect, but he heard Madame and Virginia talking and laughing together, and in his acutely sensitive mood he believed they were laughing at his misfortune. Madame had always been on his side, but at that hour he told himself that all women were treacherous and unlucky.

He went first to 14 Wall Street, hoping to find Captain Van Vroom there, but the store was practically empty. The high stools in the counting office were deserted; there were no salesmen behind the counters, and only an idle teamster lolled sullenly against the lintel of the open door.

"Where is the Captain?" asked Batavius of this man.

"Gone to the procession, sir."

"And Tulley, and Drew, and the rest?"

"Gone to the procession, sir."

"Where does it start from?"

"I hear tell, from Burns' Tavern."

So Batavius went to Burns' Tavern, and found the Captain among the crowd. He was in no mood to listen to any lovers' quarrel; he had a far more important one on his mind, and he frankly told Batavius so.

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"Well then," said Batavius, "it would not be my way to wait here—talking, talking, and no one doing anything."

"When things belong to the government of the colony, they must be done in proper order, Batavius, without regarding any one's way. That is what we wish, so then we have sent a deputation to Governor Colden, asking him for his help and sympathy."

Batavius laughed loud and scornfully. "A fool's errand your deputation went on," he answered. "Colden would rather gibbet every man in this crowd than help you."

"Which side are you on, Batavius? I tell you plainly, I can not read you the same, two hours together."

"Well then, Captain, I am a sailor; and a sailor knows that only a fool keeps an unturned sail with every wind."

"Our quarrel is so just——"

"I have reflected on it, and I am very impartial. I do justice to the government, and justice to the people, and then also I do justice to Batavius De Vries. One thing I find in all quarrels, faults on both sides; no spark, sir, without both flint and steel."

"The people are right."

"So. But I know not, yet, which side will be the strongest. It has always been my way to swim with the tide—that is what all wise men do, for then they find the water buoyant under them."

"Liberty, Batavius——"

"My Captain, there is no greater liberty than a good government."

"There it is! Our government is not a good one. It is a tyranny—but once and for all time, England must now hear us."

"She will, and the consequences will come fast on your heels—a dangerous fate."

"We are strong enough to stride over it. I see the depu-

tation returning. We are now for the City Hall. Will you go with us?"

"I have business on the ship. Also, as I tried to tell you, I am not easy about Virginia. Very provoking she is, and she even declares she will not marry me."

"I know. All women talk in that way. Before they are married it is their privilege to say to their lovers, I will, and I will not, for when they are married, they must forget little words like those. Well then, for a few weeks now, give Virginia's tongue its way, and its say."

"Captain, I trust your word. You have promised me Virginia for my wife."

"Have I not said it? *Christus*, did I ever break my word to thee? Before the New Year Virginia shall be thy wife. Come with me now, or else go about thine own affairs."

"I will go to the ship. Where is Arent?"

"Among the Liberty Boys."

With these words he turned away and joined the line of gentlemen attending the members of the Congress, who were just leaving the tavern for the City Hall. And surely there have not been in the history of the civilized world many processions more remarkable than this short, unostentatious march from Burns' Tavern, 115 Broadway, to the City Hall in Wall Street. It was led by the Mayor of the city, and followed by a large body of wealthy citizens and great merchants. There was none of the insignia that usually accompany public parades—no blowing flags, or blare of trumpets, or stir of martial music—not even the beat of drums, or the shrill call of fifes—nothing to see but a broad line of grave, orderly gentlemen, their faces full of the light of purpose, their eyes bright, outlooking, and almost daring, their steps strong, steady and unresting until they reached their appointed place. For as Captain Jansen had

once told his wife, they were going to do the deed that had long been the secret of their hearts—they were going to assert their inalienable rights as free citizens of a great kingdom; and if need be, their independence.

And they were going to do this deed in no mouse corner, but in the largest city of the American colonies; in the very sight and hearing of the powerful government which they would arraign for tyrannical and unlawful exercise of authority. The soldiers of England were ready at a moment's notice to arrest and imprison them; they could hear in their meeting place the sounds of galloping troopers, the calls and hammers of the workmen strengthening the fort, and the booming of the cannon as they were tested and planted on its walls.

These things troubled them not. They were peaceable, unarmed citizens, publicly met to consider manifest grievances. And the town was practically on their side. It had turned itself on to the streets, and was watching and waiting. The royalist party were easily distinguished by their silk and velvet and fine linen, the Colonist party by their homespun and homemade shoes and clothing. They met each other constantly, and they met as strange dogs meet on a public street—not fighting, but quite ready to fight. For nothing is more infectious than an infectious atmosphere, and the men of New York had caught fire and passion of all kinds from the very air they breathed; it was tense and vibrant, and charged with every human emotion.

Very hard work it was for the soldiers and the Liberty Boys to keep their hands off each other, but fortunately the hands of the soldiers were bound by military discipline, and the hands of the Liberty Boys by colonial interests. The tongue, however, no man can bind; and the scoffs and slurs of the military were constantly drowned in the favorite song of the Liberty Boys—

"With the beasts of the woods we will ramble for food,
We will lodge in wild deserts and caves,
We will live poor as Job, on the skirts of the globe,
Before we'll submit to be slaves."

And then the mad chorus from a thousand throats—

"Before we'll submit to be slaves,
Brave Boys!
Before we'll submit to be slaves,
Brave Boys!"

The deputation seeking the Governor's aid had utterly failed. In curt and angry words Colden answered their request. "Your Congress," he said, "is unconstitutional, unprecedented, and unlawful, and I shall give you no countenance;" then turning to an officer, he gave an order about the strengthening of the fortifications, and the reception of the Stamps. No one, however, had expected anything favorable to the Colonial Congress from Lieutenant-Governor Colden, and his foreseen refusal did not for one hour embarrass the proceedings of its members. They went to work immediately, amid an enthusiasm which neither civic nor military power could curtail or control.

Of course its demonstrations were offensive to many, and to none more so than to Batavius De Vries. After leaving the Captain he wished only to reach his ship, and the solitude he desired, as quietly and quickly as possible, but a provoking fate threw him in the way of one party of shouting, singing enthusiasts after another. Some invited, some commanded him to join them; some jeered at his fine clothing, some asked for his political opinions.

But at length *The Arms of Stuyvesant* sheltered him, and he locked himself in his cabin and sat down to take his bearings with regard to Virginia. Suddenly he was aware of his ruined ring. The empty socket affected him like a dead

eye, and he covered his face with his broad hands and groaned aloud. The open grave of many a comrade had been less painful to him than that black void where the glowing, friendly stone had lain a few hours before. The sight of the broken amulet was at length more than he could endure, and he went to the porthole and dropped the remains into the river. Then he took from a locker a bottle of Indian spirit, and drank deeply of the stupefying liquor. It brought him an oblivion peopled with unnatural horrors, all of them animated by the broken ring in some monstrous form or other.

When he was able to rouse himself from this nightmare of nameless and portentous shapes it was nearly dark, and a terror of the surrounding shadows held him in thrall. For the other world in both its good and evil aspects is always next door to us, and its apocalyptic twilight peopled with personalities of our own creation. The thick murmur of the river and the silence on the various quays and slips were crushing. Intangible things pervaded *The Arms of Stuyvesant*, phantom footsteps reverberated in his ears, the incubus of the supernatural was upon him.

But this experience of the inner side of life could not long maintain its ascendancy over a nature so opposed to it. In a short time the dread passed into melancholy; he was weighed down by Virginia's hatred of him, by the decay of trade, by the uncertainty of all his old standards of business and pleasure. He felt that something in his life had lost its balance, and it remorselessly dawned on him that it was love—that thing that ought never to be a failure. It was Virginia's duty to love him, and she hated him; nevertheless he had no intention of resigning his claim to her. Loving or hating, he was determined to marry the girl, and as he recalled her beauty, a restless fear of losing her came with the vision, and he resolved to go to the Van Vroom house

and ask Madame for a cup of tea. Physically he needed it to expel the devilish spirit he had voluntarily called to obsess him, and there had also come to his consciousness in some way a belief that Virginia was deceiving all of them, and he determined to discover her plans and her assistants.

He found everything at Van Vroom's very quiet. The Captain was smoking by the fireside, and Virginia playing a game of draughts with Harry Rutgers. Batavius placed himself where he could watch the game, and as Harry had never made any secret of his hopeless love for Virginia, he witnessed one of those pure, unselfish devotions which are spiritual triumphs. Harry indeed was well aware that his affection would never meet with any return, but his love was of that noble kind which can live for a woman without living with her. He knew of Virginia's engagement to Joris, and he knew also of her father's determination to marry her to Batavius—and he pitied the beautiful girl in this miserable dilemma.

Now that day, Harry had received a letter from Lady Rose Harley. It was little more than a cover for one addressed to Virginia, and contained only a request that he would put the enclosure as quickly and quietly into Virginia's hand as he possibly could. "It is to let her know," she added, "that some affairs of great importance to my future life have gone favorably. The news will make her happy, and its transmission make me your obliged servant, ROSE HARLEY."

Virginia had this letter in her pocket, and as soon as the arrival of Batavius gave Madame something to do, and the Captain some one to talk with, she ran to her room and read the following lines—

DARLING, the affair I came here to adjust has been settled in the most perfect manner. Everything is securely arranged. If your betrothal must take place before I return, let it; but

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remember you are not to be married till I can be your maid. I shall be in New York early in November, then you can hurry the wedding forward, if you will, as I am sure to go to England soon after I return. My dear Virginia, my unchangeable love salutes you.

ROSE.

This letter, written with a care that precluded suspicion if it should fall into other hands than Virginia's, gave the anxious girl great comfort. She felt able to face the intervening weeks, knowing that at the end of them there would be release. She resolved now to behave better to Batavius. It was only for a short time, and if she was moderately kind it would allay suspicion of her complicity in the final act of the Batavius affair.

She went back to the living-room a different Virginia. Her usual woman-slow step had the spring of girlhood in it, her eyes sparkled, her cheeks had the tint of the rose, she was smiling, and she drew her chair between her father and Harry with an air of cheerfulness. Batavius watched her with suspicion. He was sure she had some pleasant news, and he thought immediately of Joris. Harry and Joris were friends, and it was easy to leap from that fact to the supposition that Harry had brought Virginia a letter from Joris. Nothing but such a letter could have changed her so rapidly. He resolved to ask Harry to play him no underhand trick. For though Batavius trusted few men, and hardly believed in what they called "their honor," he knew, though he could not tell how he knew, that Harry Rutgers' words were true words, and his promise a thing that could never be broken.

Almost immediately Arent joined the company, and Harry went away. Then Captain Von Vroom surveyed his fireside with satisfaction. He felt in such domestic unity and closeness, Virginia must learn to appreciate the husband he had chosen for her. And Virginia's happy mood

seemed to justify this opinion. She was full of sweet confidences with her brother and laughed and whispered, and when the pleased father asked to share their mirth, Virginia told him softly of some trick or cutting witticism of the Liberty Boys, which the Captain immediately repeated to Batavius.

But Batavius was almost angry at this second-hand participation, and he spoke scornfully of those self-constituted guardians of the city's liberty.

"They are a mere mob," he said, "a vulgar mob, whom men of my condition and respectability despise. So insolently they strut, and such airs of state they put on, that a sensible man like Batavius De Vries has not even ridicule left for them—only an indescribable scorn."

"Let me tell you, Batavius," answered Arent, "that the mob, as you call The Boys, are the visible agents of invisible persons of the highest rank and character."

"Then ashamed of themselves they ought to be, Arent. For my part I like things done orderly and decently. Singing and shouting about the government is improper. I do not approve of it. And pray, my Captain, who has this fine Congress of Colonies chosen for its Chairman?"

"Timothy Ruggles of Massachusetts. I take leave to say, a good choice, Batavius."

"I do not know him. Why did they not select a New York man? John Cruger, or Philip Livingston, or Leonard Lisenard——"

"You have let something slip your memory, Batavius," answered the Captain a little coldly. "New York did not forget that she was the host, and the members her guests. Well then, the host does not honor himself; he gives all honor to his guests. Ruggles sits well in the chair. Many generations will remember him for it."

"Yet I heard, father," said Arent, "that the first words

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Mr. Ruggles uttered from the chair was a straight assertion that resistance to the Stamp Act was treason."

"My son, for those words I give him praise. In plain Dutch he said to his associates, 'By the law of England the thing we are going to do is high treason. We are taking our lives in our hands, and if there are any here present not willing to give their lives for the freedom of their country, they had better, right now, step out of line and go hide themselves.' No one did it! Thank God, no one did it! Every man had his chance to write himself down an eternal coward, but thank God Almighty, no one did it!"

"Who are the New York delegation?" asked Batavius.

"Robert and Philip Livingston, John Cruger, William Bayard, and Leonard Lispenard. You will not find anywhere finer men."

"I have known them all—a long time. I have known them. I have done business with them, ate and drank with them, and I judge not as you do, Captain. For the black bread of treason, they had an open stomach these many years. Leonard Lispenard is living on the large grants which George the Second gave to his wife's family. I always saw the ungrateful rascal through one hundred folds. And sure, I have heard you say, Captain, that ingratitude was high treason against mankind. So then, your fine Leonard Lispenard is a double traitor, to the King once, and to——"

"You talk nonsense, Batavius. If a man gives you a loaf to-day, and to-morrow takes it back six-fold, gratitude is not in the question. If George the Second gave Lispenard's wife land, George the Third is picking Lispenard's pocket on every side. I say more, he is robbing our fair city night and day, year in and year out. Our dear New York lies like a carcase almost picked to the bone by the King's ministers and emissaries."

"Well, well," laughed Batavius, "if men pick our

pockets, we must be Christians and bear it. I learned in my catechism—for I was christened in the Oude Kirk of Amsterdam—that we must forgive, or we would not be forgiven. *I bear no ill will to any man. I think of all men alike. I am just to the honest man, and just to the thief. But why indeed do men steal? To steal is a great foolishness, cheating is so easy and so much more safe and profitable. As for England——*”

“She has ruined us all.”

“Forgive her, then you will be forgiven.”

“For bad ends, you use good words, Batavius. Forgive that I may be forgiven? I will not, no, sir; I make no bargain with God. A free mercy is His promise.”

“Come, come!” said Madame. “Very tired am I of this subject. We will sing the night hymn, and then give to ourselves a little sleep.” And without waiting for approval or disapproval, she began in sonorous, emphatic Dutch a metrical verse from the Fourth Psalm—

I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou, Lord, only
makest me to dwell in safety.

The next morning Virginia was aware of a slight feeling of pity for Batavius. She reminded herself of his old kindness to her, and of the sincere liking which her father and mother, and even Arent, had for the man; and she resolved to be as friendly as circumstances permitted her to be. But with this tolerance there was no slackness in her purpose to avoid marrying him; and whatever kindness was in her intention, it doubtless sprang from that assurance of his removal which Rose’s letter implied. Batavius, however, was in no mood to accept any curtailment of what he considered his rights as an acknowledged lover; and the situation was so strained and unhappy, Madame was glad when

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one morning, in a sulky mood, he removed himself to *The Arms of Stuyvesant*.

"I know not what to think of such love-making," she said to her husband, "and what happiness is to come of it, I see not. Batavius was more sulky this morning than was civil, and if he is pleasant, then Virginia is cross. I wish then the marriage might be early; very tired am I of their tempers, and my home is unhappy with the worry and fear of them."

"It is the way of lovers."

"No, it is not the way. Also, there is something strange about Virginia. Too silent is she. Of her marriage she will not speak. As to her betrothal, she either laughs at it, or else she denies it."

"I will think about the matter. A day or two, I will take to think it over. Between my daughter and my country I am full of trouble."

"My advice to thee is, to think about thy daughter. There are men at the City Hall whose business it is to think about the country. Thou had best take a little time to find out what is wrong with Virginia. Very unhappy is she, and the house is sad and heavy with her tears and complaining. Jan, I tell thee truly, there is trouble in thy own house."

"What trouble?"

"In particular, I know not. That is for thee to find out."

"She ought to speak to her mother."

"She has spoken. It is ever the same complaint—'I will not marry Batavius. He makes me sick.'"

"Oh, then, I am tired of her foolishness. I will end that complaint very soon. Just now I am going into the town to get me a *Gazette*."

Madame turned away with a dissatisfied air. She found all her attempts to rouse in her husband an adequate anxiety

about Virginia's marriage met by the same confidence in his own authority, and his daughter's submission to it. And Madame had lost faith in Virginia's unqualified obedience. She feared, if the marriage was brought to a certain point, some flagrant violation of the rite, when it came to that point—either that Virginia would make some distressing scene, or deny her obligations, or perhaps even run away and hide herself.

Katrina had not much imagination, but on this subject her mind had vague and distressing fears.

The variation of Virginia's moods troubled and even alarmed her. She did not understand their changeableness, and she was depressed by her failure to comprehend her own child. Often she saw her go into the garden for her daily walk, weeping, and return to the house with a face calm and even cheerful. How could the sunshine, and the fresh wind, and a few late flowers alter a girl's feelings so surely, and so speedily? Yet these things were all the consolations the garden afforded—her most strict surveillance had never discovered any trace of human interest or interference.

So the unhappy weeks went away. Two more letters from Rose—both promising the certain success of their plan regarding Batavius—came to Virginia, through Harry Rutgers, and Madame began to suspect Harry of being a messenger from Joris Artaveldt.

"Thou must have noticed, Jan," she said to her husband, "that to-day, Virginia spoke to no one unless compelled. Thou thyself asked her a question twice before she answered it; but after Harry had been, she was cheerful, and asked thee many questions."

"That is the truth. I had not thought of it before. Very clever art thou, Katrina."

"One thing I know—the sooner she is married, the better it will be."

"I think with thee, and when the Congress have finished their business, I will make sure my purpose, without any delay."

"A long time they have been already, and very busy about little work."

"Not so. A great deal they have done—a great deal for all generations."

"Men should work for their own generation. They know nothing about the generation after them. Very foolish it would be to make shoes for a man's life, when he was three years old. As he grew, badly fitting they would be, and anon too small, and at last, he would throw them away as useless."

"Not so our members have done their work. It will fit our people,—it will fit any people,—so long as men know what freedom means. And my heart is glad and proud, Katrina, for this one thing, that it was our merchants—the great and unselfish merchants of New York—who first of all offered themselves, and all their business interests, to the cause of liberty, and the freedom of their country."

"All this is well enough, Jan, and I hope it ends well. But now it is not the country; it is our dear daughter. She is to be looked after. I know not why, but low down my heart sinks, when I think about her."

"I will look after Virginia. What can she do except our will?"

"Suppose then she ran away from us?"

"Who with? And where to?"

"There is Joris Artaveldt——"

"That fear is great nonsense. No money has Joris, not one pound except what his extravagant father gives him; and I can tell thee, Katrina, apple-eaters are not apple-givers. Justice Artaveldt needs every shilling he can raise. And where would the foolish children go? No domine

would marry them, if parents or friends were not at their side."

"Well, I know not, only my heart is always on a tremble; more it knows, than I know. Very clever thou art in seeing danger either on the sea, or in the rights of the city; be a little clever about thy child. If she were a ship, and there were rocks ahead, what would thou do?"

"I would take the rudder in my own hands, and she would have to answer it."

"Say once, that she would not answer it, what then?"

A dark, sad look spread over the Captain's face, and he said slowly, and almost in a whisper, "If she would not answer to the rudder—she would then answer—to the rocks!"

With these words he turned away, and Madame did not detain him. Enough had been said, and a wise woman knows when it is enough, and holds back the rest. But she went to her household cares with a heart somewhat relieved, and was about to call Virginia to help her when she saw the girl wrapped in her scarlet cloak and hood, pacing the broad walk running from the back piazza to the river. "I will let the sunshine and the wind talk a little to her," she thought, "then she may talk the more cheerfully to me." And in a few minutes the careful housewife triumphed over all other considerations. She had work to find for eight slave women, and something was not quite right wherever she went; thus in the midst of duties of many kinds it was easy to forget the girl walking so naturally in the quiet garden.

She had indeed hoped that Virginia's father would share her anxiety, and concern himself a little with the temper and condition of his unhappy child; but it was evident he did not understand her need of sympathy. And just at that hour New York was in a mood both dangerous and critical.

Taking the city as a whole, it had felt until every translation of feeling was lost in feeling itself. An ominous silence pervaded the streets. Batavius could no longer complain that "men sang and shouted against the government"; they were now enduring and waiting, and doing it in a grim, ill-tempered taciturnity, that portended much more than the noisy patriotism common at the beginning of the quarrel.

The Colonial Congress had been sitting two weeks, and there was a sense of some approaching crisis. Captain Jansen felt it in his heart, but Katrina's complaints about Virginia fretted him like a spur, and very early in the afternoon he returned home determined to have some decided conversation with his daughter. He found her writing in the living-room, and he saw her face for a moment before she noticed his approach. It was full of satisfaction. A soft light fell from her eyes upon her cheeks, and a tender smile made her mouth lovely. She had an air of perfect serenity and even happiness. The moment, however, that she became aware of her father's presence, her expression changed to one of anxiety, even alarm, and she instinctively laid her hands over the paper on which she was writing.

"Thou, father?" she asked with an attempt at pleasurable surprise. "Thou! Mother said it would be five o'clock ere thou came home."

"Where is thy mother?"

"She went to sit a few hours with Celia Moran, who is very sick"—and with these words she rose, and began to collect her papers.

"Art thou writing thy French exercises?"

"The French is very difficult, fader. I have the Dutch, and the English, why then trouble myself with the French?"

"Leave thy papers alone—what art thou writing?"

"A girl has many little things to write down, fader."

"What art thou writing?"

"Something—nothing—nothing at all."

"What art thou writing? The truth I want. Tell me the truth."

"Well then, a letter to a friend."

"So! What is thy friend's name?"

Virginia remained silent.

"What is her name—wilt thou not tell me? I see. I have made a mistake—what is *his* name?"

"I will not tell—it is my letter—and my friend. I will not tell thee."

"Then I will tell thee. A love letter to Joris Artaveldt thou art writing, and the letter thou slipped under thy portfolio was a love letter from Joris Artaveldt. Am I not right?"

Virginia set her face stubbornly and made no answer—and her father added: "Leave thy papers alone. Touch not one of them. I will not suffer it."

"They are my papers, father, not thine."

"When my right in them has been satisfied, thou may perhaps have them. In plain truth, not before."

"Thou art very unkind to me."

"Never was I kinder. Read to me the very letter thou art writing."

"Oh, no, no! I can not do that."

"Read the letter; read it at once."

"I will not. It is a shame for thee to ask a girl to read her letters to thee. It is a great shame!"

"A much greater shame it is for a girl to write what she dare not read. Once more, I tell thee to read me the letter."

"I will not. Oh, moeder! moeder!"

"Wilt thou read it to thy moeder?"

No answer.

"Wilt thou read it to thy moeder?"

"No."

"Thou wilt neither read it to me, nor to thy moeder? Well, then, I will read it to thee," and he lifted her hands and took the papers from beneath them. She rose then with a great sobbing cry, and attempted to push back her chair, but quickly found herself firmly seated again in it.

"Now listen, Virginia. I am going to read both the letter of Joris Artaveldt to thee, and thy answer to it. Where we stand, we shall then clearly know; and remember, Virginia Van Vroom and Joris Artaveldt are alone to blame if these letters tell anything a good girl and a good man would be ashamed to have told."

"Father, let me go away. I beg thee let me go to my room. Father, do not hurt me so much. I can not bear it."

"The words thou hast written, thou can hear read. That is reasonable."

"It is wicked. It is cruel. I will not stay with thee—let me go away—let me go. I will not stay. Oh, moeder! moeder! Come to me! Come to me!"

"Glad am I, that thy mother is not in the house. Now listen. I told Joris Artaveldt not to speak to thee, and not to write to thee. I told thee not to speak to Joris Artaveldt, and not to write to him. Now we will see what kind of letters willful disobedience to thy father taught thee to write."

With a cry of despair Virginia rested her arms on the table, and buried her face in her hands. She knew further pleading was useless; there was nothing now to be done but bear the shame and distress she had called unto herself—called, too, by such trivial wrongs as a "yes," or a "no," a moment of indecision, a glance of affection, or a neutral attitude of mind, instead of a positive one. Yet she would be judged by the cumulative effects of these small isolated words and acts of unkindness. How was she to bear it?

Slowly, as was his way, but in a clear, low voice, the

unhappy father began reading the letter he had recognized as in the handwriting of Joris. He paused at the first sentence, and as he went on the pauses grew longer, and his voice increased in power, until at the close the words sounded as if they were read in a storm.

"VIRGINIA, DEAREST VIRGINIA: At last we may be happy. My father has found an Episcopal clergyman who will marry us.—My father will go with us, and Mrs. Eastman and her sister will be witnesses—and my dear father will welcome you to his home—as his own daughter—the future we will plan there—Oh, beloved, come to me as soon as I return from Jersey, which will be in three days—I am all hope and impatience—Come; Come, dear one! Come at once—before made to suffer any more—JORIS."

He stood at the back of Virginia's chair while blundering through this letter; when it was finished, he sat down at her side. "Virginia," he said, "the wickedness of these words takes the light out of my eyes. Justice Artaveldt hates me; thou and all my household know that. Many wrongs he has done me—it was his joy to make my hopes and plans come to nothing. Fifteen years ago I should have sat among His Majesty's Councillors, but for Justice Artaveldt. The water front next my slip he bought secretly because he knew it was of great value to me. He has done a thousand ill-natured things to me. At my name he drops ever covert slights and mocking words, which he calls 'making a little fun.' He hates without a cause, so then all my forbearance touches him not. Very angry was he when I forbid Joris to see thee. Straight to his father the lad went with his injured pride, and the old man railed at my impertinence—to every one he met; 'a great thing it was for Van Vroom's girl, but the vulgar old sea dog could not see it; and had the impudence, yes, the damned impudence, to order Lieutenant Joris Artaveldt from his house'—and so on. I did

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not tell thee of his words. I thought it would pain thee. So careful I need not have been. For thy father, nothing thou cares."

"Oh, Fader! Fader! I do care! I do love thee!"

"No. No. That is past. Think one moment on the perfect revenge thou would give to this man. First, he takes on himself to arrange my daughter's marriage. I, and thy mother, whose business this matter is, have no part, no knowledge concerning it. Second, he chooses the witnesses. Thy father and mother do not even know the people chosen. Third, thou art a christened Calvinist; he dares to propose marrying thee by the Episcopal form, and he says, by an Episcopal minister—perhaps indeed a sham minister—this last I believe. Fourth, in this shabby, secret way he will marry thee to his son, and then take thee to his house as his daughter. My God, his daughter! I am no longer thy father!—thy mother is left out of thought or mention. Thou hast been nursed in our hearts, and carried in our arms; nothing of all that money could buy has been withheld from thee. We have put our hearts under thy feet, and have lived to feel thy feet spurn and trample on them. Virginia, thy mother and I have lived one day too long. I wish that we had died yesterday—before thy falsehood and treachery was found out. My God, have pity on us!"

"Fader, forgive me! I never thought——"

"Here is thy letter. I can not read it. All that I can bear I have read."

"But yes, thou must read my letter also. In it thou wilt see I have said, I would not leave my mother, and my father, and my home, unless the very last moment came, and there was no hope. *Then,*" and at the word a great passion took possession of her, she looked with flashing eyes into her father's face, and said vehemently —"*then* I would fly to poverty, shame, disgrace, slavery,

even death, before I would marry Batavius De Vries. Bear his name! Be his wife! No fader! Death, and whatever comes after death, would be better."

"Judgment comes after death, and a wicked girl art thou to talk of death and judgment in such a way. Go to thy room, and stay there. When thy mother comes home, I will send her to thee."

"Let me make ready for tea. Mother told me to have it ready at five o'clock."

"Dost thou think I will eat with thee? When thy fingers lifted the bread, I should remember me of a supper where even the heart of Christ was very sorrowful, because of the traitors who were breaking bread with him. Go to thy room. I will have none of thee this night. No. No!"

She went wearily away, too heavy with a conjunction of sorrows to weep. The discovery of her duplicity, the realization of its shameful wrong to her parents, her father's just anger, these things alone were almost more than she could bear. Each fought for the relief of tears, they stung her as with whips, they lashed her with cruel and self-abusive reproaches. And in a little while she was able to tell herself, that whatever destiny was before her, she had undoubtedly hurried it forward by her impatience and disobedience.

"My father told me neither to see, nor to speak, nor to write to Joris; and Rose begged me not to complicate events by bringing Joris in any way into them. *O weel! O weel!* I am to blame. I only am to blame." And surely she spoke the truth, for we always fail on the side we ourselves have weakened.

"Father may now make me marry at once," she reflected, "and I can not, I dare not oppose him. I have forfeited every right to ask grace or kindness."

Wandering distractedly, among such apprehensions and

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self-upbraidings as the anxious pleasures of deceit always bring, Virginia forgot the lapse of time. A dismal, sullen stillness succeeded her first passionate suffering, and bitter disquiet wrung her heart. It had become dark and cold. She was hungry and thirsty. Why did not her mother come to her? The wretched hours were like the weird masquerade of some terrible dream; she longed for some one to break her solitude and silence, even though it were with words of anger and reproach.

But it was midnight when Madame Van Vroom visited her daughter.

She brought her some tea and bread and a lighted candle, and sat down without speaking.

"Moeder! Dear moeder!"

"What then?"

"How is my fader?"

"Why did thou do this wicked thing? To be the cat-paw for those Artaveldts! For they were both in the plot. I say that, and I am right. Furious was Joris when thou sent him away the day Batavius came home. Dost thou think Joris would marry thee, if thou went to him? No such intentions has he. To beguile thee from thy home—to cast a shadow over thy good name—to make thee look after their house and their comfort—to give thee orders and commands and hard words, if thou did not obey—these and such like were the plans of the two Artaveldts. Thy plan was to be with that sickening boy, Joris—to work for him and his father as thou never did for me and thy own father—to give old Artaveldt the whip over thy father. Oh, Virginia, how could thou put thy loving father under the very feet of these men."

"Mother, I never promised to go to the Artaveldts, unless at the last moment every other hope had failed me; and it was Batavius or death."

"Even death would have been better."

"I am very young, moeder."

"What is thy meaning, by the last moment?"

"If I was to marry Batavius at the New Year, I would hope until New Year's morning that he might have a fever, or get drowned, or grow weary of my bad tempers, or be so much in love with Joanna Van Heemskirk he would refuse to marry me. I thought surely God would make something happen."

"Take not God into thy selfish hopes; only one side—thy own side—can thou see and feel. More was at stake than thyself, but only of thyself can thou think. Listen now, if thou marry not Batavius, he will force thy father to break their partnership. Thy father will have to buy him out, or put up *The Arms of Stuyvesant* and the three coasters for sale. Thy father has not the money to buy Batavius out, and just now, when business is worth nothing, the ships and the goods at 14 Wall Street will go for a song. If thy father refuse to sell the ships for nothing at all, he will have to go to sea with her himself. Batavius will not go. I think myself he will join Van Heemskirk, for Van Heemskirk has long envied his skill in the East Indian trade."

"I thought father was rich, and Batavius under him."

"Thy father, I fear, has trusted Batavius too far. He said to me this hour, that he believed Batavius could bankrupt him. And what dost thou think of thy father in the debtor's prison? Will Joris remember that he helped thee to put him there? Oh, no."

"Moeder, I know not these things. What must I do? Tell me. Oh, my dear fader!"

"Thy dear fader! Speak not such words. For that poor creature, Joris Artaveldt, thou would willingly sacrifice thy dear fader's life."

"Moeder, have some pity on me."

"For so cruel a girl, I have no pity. Full of sorrow is thy father, and lately every new calamity thou hast helped on. But now the whole storm is thyself—thou injurious, undutiful, ungrateful daughter!"

"What can I do? Oh, what can I do?"

"To-morrow, thy father will ask the Domine and his wife, Van Heemskirk and his wife, and Parker of the *Gazette* to take dinner with us the following day. He will then speak openly to them of thy marriage."

"My marriage! When?"

"It will be on some day next week."

"Moeder! Moeder! this is only the twenty-third of October, and Rose will not be here until the fifteen of November."

"I take Rose Harley into no kind of consideration. She is against Batavius; her fine ladyship uses him only for her sport."

"I was promised until Saint Nicholas Day. You will not break your word to me, moeder. Next week! It is impossible! I must have Rose to help me. I must wait for Rose. It is only until the fifteenth, moeder. She says that herself. See, here is her last letter. Read it, and you will see. Read it, moeder."

Madame carefully read the letter. There was not a word in it to excite suspicion—only the plainest commonplaces, and a positive promise to be in New York about the fifteenth of November; with a request that Virginia would put forward her marriage to about that date, so that it might happen before she had to sail for England.

"If you will let me wait for Rose, moeder, I will make you no more trouble. I will treat Batavius well. I will do all as you tell me. I will indeed."

"How can we trust thee? And about Batavius, I will tell thee one sure thing, he grows very cool about marrying

thee. Joanna Van Heemskirk will take thy husband from thee."

"Perhaps—if I give her leave to do so. Not unless."

"Then for thy father's sake, show thy beauty and kindness a little more."

"Moeder dear, forgive me! I am grieved in my heart, to have made you so much trouble."

"Well then, it is over. There is nothing for sin but sorrow."

"Very angry is my fader. Speak thou for me."

"Speak also for thyself, that is the right way. Do not think it is a little thing thou hast done. It is a great thing, and where it will end who can tell?"

"And my marriage? Moeder, let me have until the eighteenth. Oh, I am so young to die!"

"To die! Now what foolishness art thou talking?"

"It is the truth for me. On the eighteenth, my fader may open the big Bible, and write below my birth lines, 'Died November the eighteenth, 1765, aged eighteen years and four months'—then she began to cry softly, at the prospective inscription.

"Now I will leave thee, for if this is thy way of 'making no more trouble' and of 'treating Batavius well,' I have little faith in any of thy promises."

And Virginia felt too hopeless to make further protest. A sudden despair invaded her heart, and as soon as she was alone she gave it full sway. In this tumult of fear and anxiety she fell asleep, and then her angel visited her. She cleared away all the wreckage and rubbish of her delusive hopes, and inspired her mind with confidence and courage. All was not yet lost. Before the eighteenth of November a great deal might happen. Then she rose and dressed herself with care, and went down to seek her father.

He was sitting by the fire in the living-room, waiting for

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his breakfast. His large frame was steeped in mournfulness; his head, his arms, his whole attitude slack and drooping. He had not even lit his pipe; the dumb inertia of a wounded heart deadened all desire—he could only suffer. For he felt as if it was the eleventh hour of life, and all earthly things relating to himself going to rack and ruin.

But when Virginia knelt at his knees, and with tears kissed his big hands, and then his lips, and cried "Forgive me, fader! Fader, forgive your Virginia!" there was a quick resurrection of love and life and hope and joy. Before he knew, the dear child was sitting on his knee, and her arms were around his neck, and she was whispering her contrition against his lips. She knew not what he answered—only little love words—mostly in Dutch—from the inexhaustible fountain of fatherlove deep in his tender heart:—"arme Lammeshiel!—shoone Lammeshiel!—Ach mene Kinderken!—Ach myn Kind!—Myn Kind!—Myn liefste Kind!" *

That is the way with Love's conciliation—no explanations—no reproaches—no promises. We have no words yet for so divine a moment. When Peter went to the Master he had denied, the Master's heart went out to meet him, but we have no record of any words between them. Oh, if we had! If we had! How beyond all human thought or syllables would their gentleness be! And it is quite true that the heart-wounded father thought of this wonderful meeting, and that its memory pleaded for his erring child.

When Madame and the breakfast came into the room the forgiveness was complete. They were talking about the tulip bulbs, and their removal into the seed house; and Madame understood the trouble to be dead and buried. As

* Poor Lamb!—Beautiful lamb!—Oh, my little child! Oh, my child!—My child!—My little child!

she poured out the coffee, she asked about the dinner to be given the following day, and hoped it would not be a large one.

"Only the Domine and his wife, and the Van Heemskirks, and Parker of the *Gazette*," answered the Captain.

"With Batavius that makes six. Will Arent be with us?"

"No. When not on the *Manhattan*, he is with those young watch dogs who are on the look out, night and day, for the Stamps."

"Very good. Virginia will help me, and there will be a good dinner ready at one o'clock."

It was a hard day for Virginia, for Batavius came early, and she felt it right to regard her promise in a large manner. So she met him with a smile, and made him coffee, and told him about the dinner next day, and asked him how he wished her to dress. And Batavius fell instantly under her charm. He forgot all her offenses, and joyed himself in the light of her beaming countenance. Astonished he certainly was; but Batavius always found it easy to accept any good thing, as in some way or other his natural right.

And when he expressed his pleasure in Virginia's fine mood, and Madame asked him if Virginia's difficult moods might not be attributed to his attentions to Joanna Van Heemskirk, he was delighted to excuse bad temper arising from jealousy of his affection. He told Madame he had always been a gay fellow among pretty girls, but if his civilities to Joanna wounded Virginia, he would not see the girl again, even if she stood at the gate when he passed—a promise he fully carried out, by taking the other side of the street. So poor Joanna, after a few snubs of this kind, ceased to crimp and braid her hair, and put on her blue ribbons for the smiles of Batavius De Vries.

The next morning Virginia was her mother's right hand

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about everything, doing much she disliked doing with the utmost cheerfulness. But she did not feel that she was quite forgiven. No unkind words were said, no allusion made to her fault, but there was something like withdrawal on her mother's part, and in spite of kind words she saw an expression on her father's face of weariness and unhappiness. It was as if their life had lost its fullness, and become haggard and thin, and without interest.

When she went to her room to dress she considered this attitude. "I have lost their confidence," she thought. "I have fallen in their opinion. Confidence can not be regained quickly, but the power of beauty is instantaneous and not to be resisted. I can still be their handsome Virginia, and through their pride in me I may perhaps rekindle their love."

To such thoughts she dressed herself with great care, and when she entered the best parlor where the company were already gathered, her loveliness caused a quick, involuntary exclamation of delight. For, braving all political criticism, she had arrayed herself in a gown of soft, rich, white silk. Her exquisite arms and neck were uncovered, and round her throat was a necklace and pendant of fine moonstones. Moonstones shone from the combs that held high her bright, brown hair; moonstones closed the lace bertha that trimmed the waist of her gown; and she walked in their beauty as in a cool radiance like that of moonlight on gently heaving water. Her father advanced to meet her, but Batavius outstepped him, and she took the arm of Batavius.

"You see I am wearing the stones you gave me," she said with a smile that took the man captive ten times over.

"You shall have plenty more. You shall have silks and satins and gems of all kinds. I will dress you like a queen, my Virginia."

In a few minutes dinner was ready, and the company rose

to go to the room in which it was served. And either by design or accident, in this general movement Captain Van Vroom, Virginia, and Batavius were standing together. The Captain seized the opportunity.

"Friends," he said, "before we eat, I will ask you to rejoice with me, in the engagement of my daughter Virginia to my friend and partner, Captain Batavius De Vries."

Quick, pleasant exclamations full of kindness followed this announcement; and during them Batavius passed in front of his future father-in-law, took Virginia's hand, and kissed her.

And at that moment the door was flung wide open, and Joris Artaveldt entered.

He wore a riding suit, and cavalry cloak, boots and spurs, and was mud-stained, and weather-stained, and altogether out of comparison with his usual spick-and-span nicety. But he was inflamed by a passion so towering that it gave to his dress a singular element of fitness. It was the expression of the disorder within the man. He strode into the room unmindful of every one present, and standing before Virginia said in angry, disdainful tones—

"You cruel, perfidious woman!"

"Joris—I——"

"Take back your promise! Take back the love-token you gave me!" and he impetuously took from his breast the Strawberry Handkerchief, and tearing it violently in two, he flung it at her feet.

The next moment he had disappeared. To the clatter of sword and spurs, and one sharp cry from Virginia, he went. But the surprise was so great, and the actions and the words of the youth so quick and domineering, that no one interrupted him. Batavius was too eager to secure the torn handkerchief, and the Captain had instantly made up his mind to treat the circumstances as a bit of boyish romanc-

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ing, while no one else in the room had the right to question or reprove the intruder.

Madame Van Vroom kept her eyes upon her daughter. She saw that when Batavius stooped for the handkerchief, Virginia put her foot upon the torn symbol, and that it was then quickly lifted, and slipped into the small bag she carried over her arm. But the affair was dismissed as soon as possible. The Captain's tone of angry pity for the love-sick boy was ably seconded by the laughter and jokes of Batavius, who really seemed to regard the interruption as quite a compliment to himself. Dinner was not delayed five minutes by the event, and in the little confusion of seating her guests Madame managed to whisper to her daughter, "Keep thyself together. It will be over in two hours."

But the girl, calm as she looked, was suffering cruelly. There were passing moments when she hardly knew what she was saying or doing. It was hard work for her to keep the grip on consciousness, and indeed she felt as if it would be a luxury beyond words to let consciousness slip and fall into some abyssmal forgetfulness. Just at the moment, however, when endurance seemed no longer possible, the rather forced merry-making was brought to an abrupt conclusion. As the wine went round, the discussion on the Stamp Tax had taken rather a quarrelsome turn, for Batavius became very dictatorial with his opinions and advices.

"You will have England's anger for your nonsense, Mr. Parker," he said, "and if so, I pity you."

"Damn your pity, Captain De Vries," was the angry retort. "Let me see the man who will dare to put the stamped paper into circulation in New York! Let me see him, sir. You may pity *him*. You may pity *him*, whoever he is. Yes, sir."

At these words the door was pushed open a little way,

and an uncouth face, fringed with red hair, looked through the aperture. Captain Van Vroom stood up instantly.

"What is it, Mason?" he asked.

"The Stamps have come."

"When?"

"An hour ago."

"How did they come?"

"The ship that brought them was protected by a war vessel, a tender, and the guns of the fort."

"Where are they?"

"The ship lies in mid-river off the government wharf—the war vessel and tender are guarding her."

"Well?"

"All the streets leading to the government wharf are crowded. The ships in harbor have lowered their colors. The flags on the Exchange, the City Hall, and most of the hotels are at half-mast. They are muffling the bells in the churches."

"Come, friends," said the Captain, but there was no need to call them. The men were all on their feet, and the next minute they were hurrying towards the city. As they went, they heard bells in all directions ring out their muffled, funereal tones. Very soon they met a band of drummers. The drums were muffled in crape, and as they looked at the Captain and his friends, they pointed with their black-bound sticks to the river. Speech was unnecessary. No words could have said plainer—

"The Stamps have come!"

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE TROUBLE LOVE MAKES

THE breaking up of the dinner party was not disagreeable to Batavius. He had had a great triumph over his rival, Joris Artavelde, and he had so cleverly surprised Virginia that he had taken the kiss she had always refused him as a right, not as a favor. He wished now to find some acquaintance to whom he could praise himself. Somehow the ladies at the dinner table had not seemed aware of his special right to prominence that day. They had all furtively watched Virginia, and no one had made any observation which drew attention to his position with regard to young Artavelde, nor yet complimented him on his sensible good-nature in ignoring it.

He thought it ought to have been the topic of conversation, and yet all the men had been too absorbed in their threepenny politics to discuss such an interesting event.

Even after the departure of the men, no one made any allusion to Batavius. In spite of his fine dress, his jokes, and his high spirits, in spite of the romantic intrusion of Joris Artavelde, he had made no impression. None of the three matrons present wanted to talk about him; they went together to the front gate and listened with grave faces to the aching sounds of the muffled bells and drums, and then began to make excuses for a hurried leave-taking. Madame Van Heemskirk was anxious about her son Bram, who always would be at the point of danger; and the Domine's wife had two young nephews who must be kept off the streets if possible. Nor was their hostess sorry to be left

alone. She had her own cares and anxieties, and the anguish and despair she had seen in her daughter's eyes was an entreaty for pity she could not deny.

In a few minutes Virginia came to her, as she was standing in her fine dining-room, looking, with annoyance, at the débris and disorder left after the disagreeable dinner.

"Moeder," she said, "may I go upstairs? Yes, moeder, let me go. I can not wear these things any longer," and she touched her white silk dress and jewels with an angry disdain.

"Virginia——"

"Yes, yes, mother. I must go. The town is in black crape—this gown is dreadful—it ought to be crape—black, black crape; and these stones, they hurt me," and she pulled at them, as if they strangled her.

"Go, my child. Go, my dear one."

Then a sudden strength came to her, and she ran swift as a bird flies straight to her room, and locked herself in the solitude which seemed at that hour the one thing necessary to life. With passionate haste she almost tore from her body the rich clothing that decked it, and slipping into her cotton nightgown, fell prone among the pillows of her bed. She was suffering so much! Her very soul felt spent and stunned, and she quivered like some dying creature. The last three hours wiped out all memory of her past happy years, and even the witnesses of her shame and misery were at that hour hateful to her. The women might have seen her anguish. But no! They could see nothing but her dress, and those dreadful moonstones. The men might have seen that she was fainting, dying, but they were too busy with the turkey and the Stamp Act. Her father, who said he loved her so much, saw only Batavius and his sickening satisfaction with events, that were uttermost misery to her. And her mother—thank God her mother saw, her mother

understood! In quick, pitiful glances she had said to her, "Be patient. Be strong. It is only a little longer."

She went over and over the same road of distressful memory, until her brain and heart alike refused to entertain longer such monotony of suffering. Then sleep wrapped her like a garment, and while thus wrapped some miracle of physical restoration and spiritual light befell her. When she awoke it was night, and the house was very still. For a moment or two she lay softly smiling. From head to feet she was so perfectly full of rest. Then like a flash her sorrow found her out; she remembered everything. But the front and the end of all her trouble was the shame of the kiss that Batavius had publicly taken. It had dishonored and despoiled her, and oh, grief of griefs, and shame of shames, Joris had witnessed her degradation! With bitter tears, she confessed Joris to have done right to throw her love and her promise back to her.

This thought brought her the memory of the rejected handkerchief, and she rose and found the bag that held it on the floor. Passionately she kissed the torn, disdained symbol. It had lain on the heart of Joris; so then, next her own heart she would keep it forever more.

Standing with the little bag in her hands as she made this tender vow, she saw a glimmer of light approaching, and heard her mother's step.

Softly she unbolted the door, and stood at the opening to welcome her.

"Moeder, moeder, come in to me."

"Yes, thou dear one. I have brought thee some bread and milk. Can thou eat now!"

"I think so. What time is it?"

"Near midnight. I have been at thy door three times. Fast on sleep I thought thee. So merciful is God. When we suffer, very soon He says—'It is enough, sleep.'"

"That is the truth. When I could bear no more, I fell on sleep. Moeder, I thought my heart would break."

"I know. Once, when I had fewer years than thou hast now, I drank the same cup—to the very dregs I drank it. This is a sorrowful gate through which girlhood passes to womanhood and wifehood; and there is no key to open it but one—renunciation. I had to use it, my child."

"Poor moeder!"

"And I had no moeder to pity and to help me. I drank it alone, in secret, in the dark night hours. Like thee I thought my heart would break. But no. Good hearts do not break. When they suffer they grow strong, and at last the head bows, and the heart says, 'Dear God, thy will be done.' And God's will was thy father, who has been always to me an angel of goodness. Then thy brother Arent came to make me happy, and afterwards thyself to be my pride and joy and dear delight. Now tell me, what can I do to comfort thee?"

"Could thou speak to Joris, mother, and tell him it was all my father's doing. If thou would only say to him 'Virginia loves thee, Joris, and very soon she will explain all.'"

"These things I could not do. Think once, and thou wilt not ask me."

"Moeder, I hate Batavius. I hate him!"

"I understand. Yesterday he was so hateful. So full of himself. So conceited. Every one, even the Domine and thy father, had to give way to him."

"His kiss burns my lips. No water will wash them clean again, and when I think of Joris——"

"Well then, Joris is handsome. Though he had been riding all the day he looked bold and brave, and full of fire."

"And oh, moeder, he has a face so good and so beautiful!"

"I have said that."

"And his heart is true and loving."

"I doubt it not. When he spoke to thee, it was with anger, but his eyes were full of love and pity."

"How can I help loving him, moeder?"

"Yet thou must conquer thy love. He will never see thee again. I think he will go to England at once. And when thou art married it will be a great sin to think of him. Let that help thee to forget."

"No, it will not help me. I shall never forget. How can father be so cruel?"

"Not cruel is he. No, indeed! He loves thee more than his own life. Listen to me. Thy father has some trouble in his heart. When he dies it will be in a moment. Before that moment comes, he wants to see thee in thy own home. I have told thee this, because I would not have thy father fall dead at thy feet in some disputing. See now, what sorrow walks at my side all the time—night and day. Is there wonder that I worry me when he goes among quarreling men, or stays out longer than he might do? Virginia, I have heard people say there is a skeleton in every house. I think then there is one in every heart."

"Moeder, the bread and milk has done me good. Must I marry Batavius? Is there no way out of it?"

"I see none. For thy father's sake what can thou do?"

"Anything, but marry Batavius. I will give up Joris—
O weel! O weel!"

"Joris has given thee up. He is out of thy life."

"When I tell him all——"

"He will say to thee, thou art a coward, a woman without spirit. Remember what he proposed to thee. He thought thou ought to give up father, mother, home for him. And he will not forgive that kiss."

"O God! What must I do?"

"In a right spirit, what thou hast just done. Ask God to guide thee. If He interfere, thy father and all of us will know it is His interference, and that would end the trouble. With the whole heart, then, say, 'Unto thee, O God, I commit my way.'"

Virginia did not answer. She had committed her way to Rose Harley. Through deceit and disobedience she was at that hour looking for deliverance in a manner far from the right way. And as yet the sum of her success was a certain loss, and a very uncertain gain; she had lost Joris, but would she escape Batavius?

It is a good thing, it is even a blessing, that all kinds of sorrow are conventionally limited by the orderly demands of every day's domestic life. Madame had not said one word which permitted Virginia to escape the salutary restraint. When she awoke in the morning, she knew that her place and her work was waiting for her, and that she had no privilege to seclude herself in order to think over and over the distracting events of the previous day. True, she looked ill and miserable, but her father put down his cup of coffee, smiled as she entered the living room, and said a frank and pleasant good morning. He saw neither her pallor nor her air of suffering. He thought she had behaved with great decorum and discretion during the trying ordeal of the previous day, and he said so, adding, "Batavius was pleased with thy beauty, and with all thou said and did;" and for the sake of her mother's warning glance, she did not answer as she wished to, "I am sorry! I care not to please Batavius."

Fortunately, ere this clash of feeling found expression, Arent entered. He was in a state of great excitement, his sailor's cap was pushed back, showing his brown curly hair, his face was flushed, his eyes were flashing, and he held triumphantly aloft a fluttering piece of white paper.

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"What have you got, Arent, my boy?" shouted the Captain.

"A mortal defiance, fader. Read it."

The Captain took the paper, Virginia clasped her brother's hand, and Madame made him a cup of coffee.

"Moeder, I have had my coffee. I can not eat anything. Fader, what say you?"

"Who wrote this paper, Arent?"

"No one knows. A copy of it was found at daylight this morning posted on every street corner, and on the doors of every public building. Some big work was that. Who did it, no one knows."

"Where did you get this copy, Arent?"

"Harry Rutgers gave it to me."

"Hum—m—m!"

"Harry was in the City Hall yesterday afternoon when the Stamps came, and he told me the members of the Congress at once, without knowing what they were doing, leaped to their feet, and one of them cried out, 'We will not submit to an English Parliament; we will no more submit to Parliament than to the Divan at Constantinople!' And the members cheered the man, and the words flew like wildfire, and this morning they were in every mouth. Come, fader. We have no time to lose. Come, we can not do without you. The sailors on every ship in the harbor are calling for Captain Jansen."

"But wait, Jan! Wait, Arent!" cried Madame. "The paper! Tell us what is in it."

"Katrina, Arent shall read it to you;" and the old man removed his silk cap from his head, and stood up to listen to the daring words. Then Arent took the paper as if it was the hand of some visible divinity, and read aloud the message it bore with such fiery enthusiasm that every word

seemed to be both a personal challenge and a separate threat—

Pro Patria.

*The first man that either
distributes, or makes use of Stamp
Paper, let him take care of
his House, Person, and effects.*

Vox Populi.

We dare.

The words kindled every heart, and for the moment all private cares were forgotten. The Captain would not sit down again; he finished his cup of coffee standing, and then went to put on his warm overcoat and beaver cap. Madame followed him. Arent turned to Virginia—

“My sister! My sister!” he said tenderly, drawing her close to him. “So sick and unhappy art thou! I see it. I have heard, dear one. Very cruel it was of Joris.”

“Who told thee?”

“Harry. Joris went to Harry, and Harry said, “Virginia is not to be blamed. She is as true as steel. I’ll warrant her with my own honor.”

“Oh, thou good brother! Thou knew what would comfort me; and with the words thou came.”

“Arent!”

“Coming, moeder.”

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"I hate Batavius, I will die rather than marry him. Oh, Arent, how can I escape this horror?"

"If he is so dreadful to thee, thou shalt not marry him. I will put thee on the *Manhattan* and carry thee to the end of the world."

"Thou good, good brother!"

"Arent, thy father has gone," cried Madame impatiently.

"Coming, moeder! Keep thy strong heart, Virginia. A man so hateful to thee thou shalt not marry. I will hide thee, and take thee where Batavius can never come nigh thee."

Then she kissed him in a flood of happy tears, whispering, "This is my kiss, and this, and this, I give for Rose."

"Would she like thee to do that?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because she loves thee."

"Arent! Arent!"

"Here I am, moeder," and he kissed her at the open gate, and then bounded after his father, who was hurrying down the Broadway as if the salvation of New York depended on his presence. And the feeling that stirred his steps was not egotism, but one which he shared with every good citizen—that sense of individual responsibility which makes a man in any national crisis go to the van, lest peradventure it might be for him specially that God had a charge that day.

After Arent's departure, Virginia walked and worked as in a dream. It was as if suddenly a miracle had been worked in her affairs. Harry Rutgers had dropped a doubt into the angry jealousy of Joris, and the doubt would fret him to remembrance; he would not be able to put her quite out of his memory, and time might bring her the opportunity of explaining her false position. And Arent's sympathy and promise was a wonderful thing. "Oh, if I had

only gone to him with my terror and despair;" she thought. "How much better it would have been to go away with my brother than to have Batavius carried away by——"

She dared not continue the reflections, and she went upstairs to put her room in order. For she had been shocked when she rose to find her white silk gown, and white stockings, and pink sandals, lying in a heap on the floor. On her dressing table the moonstones were scattered, and she also recalled the startling fact that she had left the precious Strawberry Handkerchief among the neglected garments. Never, in all her sweet orderly life, had she gone to sleep with her room so untidy, and her clothing so neglected, and so carelessly flung from her. "I must have been crazy," she whispered, as she stood with bare feet and unbound hair beside them. "I wonder what my moeder thought of me!" Had she known, it was this almost unnatural neglect that had touched her mother more than any spoken complaint could have done. Indeed, the huddled heap of finery was a pitiful thing to Katrina, who knew her child's sense of neatness and order to be one of the deepest instincts of her nature.

As soon as her room was in perfect order, Virginia tried to face the day and its possibilities. The prospect was unbearable. Not only would she have to meet Batavius with some show of courtesy, but there was sure also to be a rush of visitors of all kinds. The scene at the dinner party made by the indignant Joris would be the general topic of conversation, and share with the Stamp Act the speculations and personal feelings of the restless women, whose usual lives had been so disturbed by political circumstances that they would welcome the gossip as a relief from the iterating thoughts of public wrongs and individual loss. Without formulating these ideas, they were clear as if rung one by one in her ears; and she knew they were actualities. How

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was she to answer the ill will, the curiosity, sarcasm, or even the friendly sympathy she would be compelled to listen to? What armor against these slings of humanity would be best? She knew not how to decide.

Happily Madame settled the question for her. "Virginia," she said as she stood in the renovated room, and saw in its order the sign of her daughter's ability to grapple with circumstances. "Virginia, you are sick this day. Come not downstairs. My dear one, put on your nightgown, and tell your sorrow to your pillow. Much comfort can come that way, yes, and good counsel also."

"Moeder, moeder! So good are you! I know not how I could bear the people who will call to-day."

"Bear them! Thou could not bear them. To me they may speak their mind, and if their speech is not good, I have the years to reprove it. A child art thou. I will not have them browbeat thee, and then be shocked if one word thou said in thy own favor."

"If my little wheel I might have, moeder?"

"Yes, that is good. Turn thy wheel and thy thoughts quietly together, and peace and strength may come in its soft burring. Often I have found it so. And be of a good courage. Though thou art only a woman,—a child-woman,—a good courage is the first thing and the last thing every woman needs. Yes, indeed, old and young need it, and a woman without courage is a knife without an edge. Of what use is such a knife?"

"I see not which way to turn, moeder."

"Well, then, stand still and leave thy troubles alone; think not of them, others will think for thee. Only be cheerful, and of good courage; for what the hours will bring, no one can tell. Every hour has its gifts of chances; some may be for thee."

So she left her daughter comforted and encouraged, satis-

fied that the little wheel and the day's solitude would bring her the strength necessary for the morrow. And she was herself in just that half-defiant mood which smiles at the prospect of opposition, being not only ready for the encounter, but pleased that it should take place.

All the early morning hours she faced it, meeting every fresh attack with a smiling unconcern, unless when it was necessary to tear the sting from envy, or the veil from those hearts wickedder than all others—the hearts which rejoice in evil. But as the day grew towards noon, there was a lull; for in spite of the Stamp Act, dinners were an important event, and Katrina and her callers were alike compelled to prepare for it. But in Katrina's case, there was meat in plenty left from yesterday's feast, and some time before noon she was sitting with her knitting in her hand, the comfort of a Dutch Psalm singing in her heart, and the echo of it on her lips.

Sooner than she expected, Jansen returned home. She knew there was anger in his step, and as soon as she lifted her eyes to his, she saw it on his face. But she did not allude to the fact. She was determined that for once Jansen should ask for her sympathy. Why this little bit of awkwardness seemed at that hour good for her, she could not have told. It was a most unusual mood, an absolute reversion of their ordinary attitude. Nevertheless, in spite of all Jansen's efforts to make her notice his troubled condition, she remained oblivious. She offered him his pipe, and he refused it; yet she did not ask, "What is the matter with thee, Jan?" He kicked off his street shoes with unnecessary vigor, and she quietly pushed his slippers towards him, and made no remark about his temper. She told him Joe Smith had been to sell hay, and Abe Thomson to buy wood, and he answered her only with two words better not written down, and she did not reprove him, she did not even seem to notice them.

He asked crossly for a drink of water, and she gave it, without the suggestion that a little Hollands would make it healthier for him. In short, for twenty minutes she was a Katrina so provokingly calm, so unbelievably inattentive to him, that he wondered with constantly increasing irritation what was the matter with her. At length he asked sharply—

“Art thou cross, Katrina?”

“No, my Jan,” she answered sweetly.

“Dost thou not see that I am cross?”

“With whom art thou cross?”

“With the Governor, and also with Batavius.”

Then Katrina let her knitting fall to her lap, and asked, “How came thou across the Governor? He is not in thy way.”

“Purposely to see him, I went.”

“Such foolishness!”

“It was for Virginia’s sake. I thought as yesterday’s affair went so well, I would follow luck with more luck.”

“Only ill luck was there yesterday.”

“Not so. It was good luck to get rid of that Artaveldt boy, and while yet Virginia was angry at him, it would be better luck to get the marriage over.”

“Virginia’s marriage?”

“Yes.”

“She was promised until the eighteenth of November.”

“But I say, I thought it best to get the marriage over. So to the Governor I went for a license.”

“Well, then, what came of thy visit?”

“Hard it was to reach him, and when I did so, with a splutter of bad words he met me. I could not make any sense of them.”

“Scotch, no doubt.”

“Scotch, or no Scotch, they were bad words; so I told

him to speak to me like a Christian, and then he said—plain enough—‘You are a spy, Captain Van Vroom, to spy out the state of the fort you have come.’ And I answered politely, ‘Governor, you lie. For a marriage license for my daughter, I come.’ And he said he would be damned if he would give me one. I might wait for the Stamp license. And I said I would be damned if my daughter should be married by a stamped paper; and I told him very plainly it was his paid duty to give me a license; and he said it was out of his duty, for the new Governor was at hand, and I was to be off, and the devil take me!”

“Oh, Jan! Why did thou put thyself in the way of his cursing?”

“I wanted what he could give me. As for his bad words, I told him to say as many as he liked in good Dutch or English. I said Scotch cursing was the devil’s cursing, and none but Scotchmen understood the devil. He grinned at that, and asked who my daughter was to marry, and when I told him Captain De Vries, into another passion he went; and said he would not give me a license for all the gold in New York; and I said New York was left so poor by the government, I could perhaps better that offer; then he began to pity Virginia, and to sneer at Batavius, and I told him that he had nothing to do with my family, and his opinions I wanted not. I wanted a license. Something else I said,—perhaps I did not pick nor choose my words,—and he called me a traitor, and I called him a turncoat, and I told him a turncoat was the meanest sinner in or out of hell, and that the devil would teach him that lesson; and very likely I said something worse, for I was in the hands of two soldiers, and then out of the fort, and out of every kind of temper for an hour or two, and knew not whether I was Jansen Van Vroom, or Jansen somebody else.”

“And in that hour or two, where did thou keep thyself?”

"In my own place. I went to 14 Wall Street, and shut myself up with the raging, cursing creature that had been christened Jansen Van Vroom. I talked reasonably to it, and promised it satisfactions, and so got it to smoke a pipe, and come to some understanding. Then in marched Batavius. Yes, he marched in, as if he was at the head of an army, and my head was aching, and I said—perhaps a little crossly—'Make some less noise, Batavius. Thy big feet stamp. Is not walking good enough for thee?' Then he too had rough words ready, and far from respectful words they were."

"Very often lately, he has talked to thee as if he were master of all things. Thy own fault it is, Jan; too kind art thou. What talk was between you?"

"I told him I had been to see the Governor about the marriage license. I thought that would please him. Power of God! He fell into a rage that would have sweat the devil. He said I made enemies for him—that I was destroying his business—his business, Katrina—he said that. He vowed I was hated by all the respectable people in the city, and what for, he asked, had I meddled with his marriage license? It was not my business, and so on, and so on, worse and worse. And, Katrina, I was dumb with the something in my throat, when he stamped himself away, with a last bit of insulting advice—to remember that I was only old Jansen Van Vroom, a busybody whom nobody particular minded. Oh, Katrina! Katrina!"

"My poor Jan! My dear Jan! The ungrateful creature might have killed thee."

"No. I said to myself, I will not die for Batavius De Vries; his parting words would speed a soul to the devil; that is not the way I am going. So I only gave him three words, and those words I would not say in thy hearing."

"But in God's hearing thou said them."

"I do not fear for that. God likes a man to stand up to his enemy, and answer him. A coward finds no favor in God's sight. Are not the Sacred Scriptures full of strong words. It is for that reason Dutchmen love their Bibles."

"I am sorry for thee Jan."

"Yes—perhaps—but when I came to thee for a little kindness, nothing had thou to say, nothing to offer me; scarce into my face thou lifted thy eyes. It was the last blow."

"Oh, Jan, forgive Katrina. Many people have been here this morning. Slant looks and doubtful speeches I have had to bear about our Virginia. I was thinking of them."

"But it is of me thou should think, Katrina. When to my home I come it is of me thou should think. As soon as I cross the doorstep I look for thee, and I listen for thy words, and the kindness of thy hands and thy lips I expect."

"That is thy right, Jan, and it is my pleasure to give thee all thy right. Come now, and we shall have some dinner, and then talk thy troubles away. There is nothing in them—nothing at all. Dear Jan, take not up sorrow at interest. All will come right. As for Batavius, he is neither friend nor enemy worth having—he believes everything like a little child, or he denies everything like a madman. Before night he will come to himself, and then very sorrowful he will come to thee."

The trouble of her husband made Katrina alter her directions to Virginia. She went to her daughter and said, "Listen. Thy father has been quarreling with the Governor, and also with Batavius. Comfort he is needing, so dress thyself, and come down to him, and see that only kind words are spoken."

Then Virginia put by her wheel, and went with her face full of light, and her heart full of love, to her father. He looked up as she entered the room, and her eyes beamed their

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sunshine upon him. Drawing her low spinning chair to his side, she leaned her head against his heart, and whispered sweetly—

“Who has been grieving thee, my dear fader? That poor mouse of a man who has shut himself up in the fort? They say he is crying and trembling with fear—like a baby in the dark, he is frightened. Dost thou care for him? What he says, he knows not.”

“He said thy father was a spy, and a traitor, and a liar.”

“Fader, dost thou owe him any bad words?” and she laughed and lifted her face for his kiss. “Had thou not plenty in thy mouth, to pay him quick in his own coin? If not, Virginia will lend thee a few—a silly old man is he, about the living world; only the dead men in his library he knows. And so conceited is he of the bits of paper, and the ribbons, and medals sent to him from England and France, by men as silly as himself! You would think he had fought battles and won empires when he shows them; yes, indeed, though he looks then, fader, like a grown man playing with his tin toys and baby rattles”—and he imitated the Governor’s manner and speech so cleverly that Captain Jan was constrained to laugh at the solemnly ridiculous travesty—‘This order, ladies and gentlemen, is from a great Scientific Society; a trifle acknowledging my famous “Treatise on the Motion of the Planets”; this medal, silver gilt, you perceive, came for my “Inquiry into the Operation of Intellect Among Animals”; and this ornamented ribbon—to be worn thus across the left shoulder—for my “Treatise on the Cure for Cancer”;’ and so on, and so on. To be sure, in the exhibitions, and explanations, and illustrations, he is very clever and funny; but why should he talk about spies and traitors? Very cruel it is to keep him among cannon and swords; a lancet to prick a boil or a carbuncle is the only

steel he can use. Why don't the Liberty Boys give him a furlough? What is the good of frightening him to death?"

To this tirade she gave a mimic reality by the play of her hands and face, the tones of her voice, and the occasional flavoring of a Scotch word. Jan was laughing heartily before she had finished, and the sting of his quarrel was quite drawn. Then she added the salve necessary—"You may be sure, fader, he was vexed and sorry as soon as you were gone. Then he would want to say, 'Give me your hand, Van Vroom. In politics we differ, but our friendship was old and tried when the Stamp Act was born'; and so he would go on, for Governor Colden's good side was born with him, and his bad side he has put on like a garment. He does always what he thinks is right."

"That may be so. Every Scotchman thinks he should do what is right in his own eyes—and what is wrong too—if he likes. Elder Semple is another Scot. I let no man call me a spy and a traitor—that is what Colden did."

"Call him the same. He has been a traitor to the people who elected him over and over, and he has had scores of spies trying to find out what the people were doing. Such words mean only a man's opinion. If he had called you thief or fool——"

"Suppose he had called me 'Old Jansen Van Vroom, a busybody whom nobody minded'; what then Virginia?"

"He would have told a lie. Thou art not old. In the prime of thy life thou art. I would back thee against any young man in New York, either to sail, or to trade, or to fight. I would even be a little sorry for the young man who had to parry or take the blows of thy cutlass. Thou art straight as a young pine, far straighter than Harry Rutgers—ten times straighter than Batavius—and if, instead of petting Batavius, thou had to fight him, at thy feet begging thy mercy he would be, in three minutes."

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"Batavius is a good fighter."

"Ten times better art thou, I will swear to it. Thy eyes are flame when thou art angry, thy arms are long and strong, thy heart could never fail thee. Why, fader, if the sailors in harbor came to fighting, no other Captain will they have, but Jansen Van Vroom. This is well known to all men."

"But how can thou know these things?"

"Fader, the things we know best of all are the things no one tells us, and there are guesses that teach more than our eyes can see; also love reads with the heart, and feeling is surer than anything else."

"Thou art a little philosopher."

"I hope not. Like Governor Colden I do not wish to be. It is too much. From books I learn very little, but when I sit spinning my heart talks to me. And often it says—a good man and a strong man is thy father, full of courage and kindness. Whoever may be on the wrong side, thy father will stand on the right side, yes, even though he should stand alone. Never once did my heart say to me, thy father is an old man. That would be a lie. My heart would not lie to me."

At this moment two doors opened at once—Madame came from an inside one bringing with her the aroma of hot chocolate and coffee, and the sweet homely odor of freshly cooked wheat cakes, and fried chicken; and from the outside door Harry Rutgers and Batavius entered together. Then Madame's prophecy was fulfilled. With hands outstretched, and in his most extravagantly bonhomie manner, Batavius went straight to the Captain—

"My friend, my father, my Captain, I am sorry! Pardon thy unhappy Batavius! He was not to blame; it was the little devil in that black Indian bottle that spoke to thee. And his way is not the way of Batavius. The bottle, I have broken to pieces; the little devil is fled; never more shall he

behave to thee so shamefully—thus knowest it is not the fault of Batavius, my Captain! Wilt thou not take my hand?"

A little reluctantly Jan took the offered hand.

"Thou hast forgiven thy Batavius?"

"Let it pass. Faults must be forgiven—if it be possible. How went affairs to-day?"

"At 14 Wall Street there was little doing, yet more there than at——"

"I mean not at 14 Wall Street. What about the Stamps?"

"Harry can tell thee best. Some one ought to sit where trade comes, they might sit in Fortune's way."

"Harry, have the Stamps been landed?"

"Not yet, Captain. The Governor summoned His Majesty's Council for advice, but only three of the Councillors answered the summons."

"Who were the three?"

"Judge William Smith, Chief Justice Horsemanden, and Joseph Reade."

Jan laughed pleasantly. "Very little comfort would they give him," he said.

"Very little, indeed. Judge Smith warned him that the detention of the merchant ship made him liable to suits for damages from every merchant who had any goods on board. And what he further advised concerning suits, damages, expenses and the like, frightened and angered the old gentleman. He asked Justice Horsemanden what he should do about the papers, and the Justice told him he might transfer the Stamps to a government warship or sloop. Then he asked why not bring them to the fort, and Horsemanden bowed and answered, 'Certainly, if the citizens will permit you to do so'; upon which the Governor went into a great passion, and told the Councillors they wished to incite a riot

and make him face the trouble they themselves had prepared. Indeed, he said many things he ought not to have said, and the three Councillors asked to be excused, as their advice had not authority—a quorum not being present. Really, the Governor is in a hard position.”

“For my part,” said Batavius, “I am sorry for him. He goes into passions, and then he manages everything badly. That is to be expected.”

No one noticed Batavius, and Harry continued his story—“The Congress finished their address to the House of Commons to-day, sir. It has been signed, and is now ready to be forwarded. John Cruger must have the credit of it. A more weighty, just, and temperate paper could not have been framed. It is a straight, powerful presentation of our rights and grievances.”

“One year, perhaps two years, it will take the House of Commons to read our Rights and Grievances. Are we to sit idle and wait on the House of Commons? No, no. We have the work and the trade at our finger ends. We can’t wait, we won’t wait; the Stamps must not be used; our business must not be stopped for want of them. Paper, paper, paper! Paper stamps on the Government’s side! Paper Addresses to the Government on our side! What good is there in writing? Men speak out, and if speaking does not avail, they *do* something; yes, Harry, they *do* something. Tell me then what is the Colonial Congress going to *do* with their Memorial Paper, now that it is written and signed.”

“A deputation of its members is to carry the paper to London. Arent is to take them there.”

“Arent! About that I shall judge.”

“Arent is too young,” said Batavius. “He has not much experience, and the *Manhattan* is a small ship, *The Arms of Stuyvesant* is more respectable.” Then turning to Captain

Jan he added, "There might be some good tradings. I have an idea. I will think it over."

"Thy brains thou need not trouble. Arent is going. 'Tis a great honor for the youngster; he is not to be put aside from it. I will see that he has his way. Yes, I will surely see to it."

"I expected to find Arent here," said Harry. "Ah, there is his step."

At Harry's word Arent entered the room, his face alight and purposeful, his bearing showing his pride in the commission offered him. "Fader," he cried, "the Colonial Congress wishes me to carry the members with their petition to London. They want a swift ship, and what ship can clip the *Manhattan*? I may go, fader! Yes, I may go. Say yes, fader. I will put them to London in thirty days."

"Wind and weather being willing, Arent."

"That is allowed. What say you, fader?"

"The compensations will——"

"I have not thought of them."

"They need not be urged presently, but should be made an obligation on a favorable future."

"See to that thyself. The *Manhattan* is idle, and though she has behaved well, considering she hates being tied like a log at her pier, and longs for a scamper with every stitch set, and the green seas flying over her cross trees——"

"No, no, Arent! When the green seas are playing that game, sail light as light, my boy. But what about cargo? Half a dozen passengers and that weighty paper Harry was telling us about won't steady any boat. Well, well! Thou must go to London, Arent. I will look over the *Manhattan* with thee in the morning, and make some understandings with the Congress. Business is business, and I like everything plain and straight—this on my part, that on your part, and then at the end both parts satisfied."

During this conversation Virginia looked with anxious eyes at her brother, but he was so excited with the prospect before him that he never noticed the pale, frightened girl. And very soon both Harry and Batavius were drawn into eager conversation, and Virginia felt the fear and tension too hard to bear. Every hope appeared to be slipping away from her. For Harry spoke of going with Arent, and if they sailed away together, and Rose did not succeed, or did not arrive before the eighteenth, she knew not of any friend who would shelter or help her. It would then be Batavius or death, unless some unforeseen miraculous mercy stepped between her and the fate she abhorred.

Both Arent and Harry seemed to have quite forgotten her sad case. They talked so eagerly about politics, and then with such absorbing interest about cargoes and ballasts, that she grew more and more unable to endure the conversation, and with a little smothered cry of distress she whispered a good-night to her mother and went to her room. And no one, not even Harry, noticed her departure. This neglect emphasized in a cruel manner her anxiety. What help could she expect from men who in the excitement of a business proposal forgot her existence?

Then in a paroxysm of despair all the folly of her agreement with Rose found her out. Why had she been in such a hurry to decide? Why had she left her fate in the hands of a girl who might easily find herself unable to help her, when perhaps it might also be too late to seek other assistance? Why, oh, why, had she not gone to Arent the first of all? Arent might now sail for England before Rose arrived. And to tell Arent of her dilemma was to be false to Rose. Arent would hardly condone that fault. In fact, all her own natural instincts, and all her acquired ideas of right and wrong, forbade such a course. She must keep her word to Rose, fulfill her part of the contract, no

matter what the result to herself. In so doing she might have to put from her all of hope and love and happiness, but she must bear it. It was a self-inflicted wound, a lost grief. This truth was like a raised, open hand before her, and she winced under the deserved blow. At that hour she found the gates to which she had no key.

CHAPTER NINE

THE TRIUMPH OF THE PEOPLE

ON the twenty-fourth of October the stamped paper reached the city of New York, but it was not to go into circulation until the first of November. During this interval New York was tumultuously angry and anxious. It was virtually insurgent. Business was at a standstill. No sounds of traffic were on its streets, only the multitudinous murmur of human voices, broken at intervals by the passionate shouts of angry men. For "the Declaration of Rights and Grievances of the Colonists in America" had done nothing to soothe or satisfy the populace. The sore was burning in every heart at that moment, and this plaster was too small to cover it, and too far off to give any relief. It was with great difficulty men were persuaded to wait and see if the Governor, in the face of such opposition, would dare to enforce the Stamp Act.

In the meantime the women, though scarcely taken into recognition, were perhaps the greatest sufferers. They had their daily burden to bear, without the strength and enthusiasm of numbers to help them. Each in her own home burned with indignation and trembled with fear, and their men folk, reasoning, lecturing, arguing on the streets, hardly thought of them. Yet they felt all the pressure of the one great calamity, and with it had to endure the constant worry and irritation of the little trials incident to the great trial's presence—the fear of danger to those they loved—the almost unbearable impertinence and laziness of their slaves—whose inclinations led them constantly to the charm of the

crowded streets, and whose delight it was to bring home exaggerated or lying accounts of quarreling and bloodshed. Then no order was possible in houses used to exquisite order; meals were wanted at the most unusual hours, sleep was taken by day or night, as convenient to street movements, and every household duty that had been regular as the clock was turned topsy-turvy, so that, however much they longed for news and sympathy, they were compelled to remain on their own hearths; for at any moment husbands or sons might come in for a hasty meal, a clean garment, or an hour's sleep.

Katrina took this disturbance very impatiently. Virginia was glad of the oblivion it gave to her private sorrow. For with the house in constant turmoil and disorder, and her husband and son out of her sight and care, Katrina did not notice the daughter who was safe at her side. And Virginia did not ask for notice; she was grateful to escape questioning and directions which would follow it. For it was impossible for any one to advise her safely, since she could not tell them in detail the circumstances which baffled and distressed her life. In her case there was nothing to be said, and nothing to be done. Arent was going away in spite of his promise to stand by her, and Harry Rutgers spoke of going with him. Harry had seemed a possible help if all others failed, but even Harry's affection had forgotten her.

Only Rose's promise was left, and Rose had not written for a longer time than was her custom. It was therefore likely that Rose had met difficulties.

And the following Sabbath the banns of marriage between Batavius and herself were to be called in the kirk. When her thoughts reached this point, she was always confronted with the proud, sorrowful face of Joris. Again his tall figure in its military cloak, and spurred riding boots,

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came rapidly towards her. Again he tore from his breast the pretty Strawberry Handkerchief, rent it in two, and flung it, with all the love it promised, down at her feet. Then, no matter what she was doing, she fled sobbing to the solitude of her room. Yet such hours were not lost hours; she was learning in them the first lesson sorrow teaches all who sit at her feet—that complaining is both useless and unjust, since destiny has only the weapons we give her. Our own fault! Always our own fault!

On the third day of this turbulent week, the Stamps, with the sullen, half-rebellious permission of the people, were removed from the ship which brought them, and placed in the fort. Captain Van Vroom was one of the discontented with this measure. He came home in great anger, though Batavius was at his side, trying with every plausible argument to prove the wisdom of this course.

“We took oath they should never be landed,” shouted Jansen, “and we have let a few rogues carry them into the fort. We are traitors to our own oath. We are traitors and nothing less.”

“We are not traitors, Captain. All the moral and respectable men in New York want the Stamps in the fort. It is proper. It is necessary.”

“All the cowards in New York want the Stamps in the fort. Safer it is for them. More comfortable it is. Their sleep they missed. Watching was too hard. No pillows had they, no blankets, and cold now are the nights. Cowards, I say!”

“Do you think Batavius De Vries is a coward?”

“Well, then, like a coward he talks. Yes, indeed, he talks like one. Let him keep his mouth shut.”

At this point they entered the house, and Katrina faced them. She was in an extraordinary temper, her head was flung backward, her eyes flashing, her whole air and man-

ner that of a woman angry and determined. She carried a jug of boiling water in her hand, and almost threw it down at their feet.

"Take some care, Katrina. What art thou doing? That jug nearly missed the table, and what then?"

"Then, Jan, both thou and Batavius would have been scalded, and so have got what you deserve. Are not the streets of New York big enough for your quarreling? Yes, they are, and into my house you shall not bring it. Mind what I say. I mean it; yes, I mean it."

"Katrina! Katrina! What is the matter with thee? Art thou gone stark crazy?"

"Yes, and no wonder it is. See now, no more bad words will I have—cowards and rogues and such like names you shall not call any one. Next thing it will be hands and blows, for when the tongue has said its worst, then the hands take up the quarrel. Always that is so. I will stop the tongue's temper, then the hands will not be to tie. Also, there is something else, Jan; the dinner hour is known to thee, and the bed hour is known, and it will be good for all who want meat and sleep to remember them. Take that advice into thy memory."

"Katrina, I am amazed at thee."

"And at thee I have been amazed very often lately. This day is enough; think only of it—thy breakfast was to serve when of dinner I was thinking, and for dinner thou comes when it is time to set the batter for the *avondmaal* waffles. I will not have such ways! I will not!"

Then Jan smiled broadly, and looked at Batavius. The smile had a double meaning. It said first, "Listen, that is one kind of talk that married men have to put up with"; and the face of Batavius had an evil look of denial on it. It said second, "Try thy hand at making things pleasant," and Batavius turned to the angry woman and said—

"Mother, our Captain is well home, even at this hour. If it come to that, very thankful we should be he comes home at all."

"Such nonsense you talk, Batavius!"

"Truth and common sense I talk always. That is my way. Listen: had I not come between the Captain and the sailors in the harbor—nearly two hundred fierce, angry men—he and they had been fighting the soldiers for the Stamps at this moment."

"And pray what made thee interfere? Captain Van Vroom knows well when to fight, and how to fight, without thy meddling."

"Mother, if they had boarded the sloop and fought the soldiers, there would have been bloodshed and death. An overt act, that would have been, and then civil war, and the city in flames, and the devil to pay."

"The sloop! What mean you? The Stamps were on a merchant ship."

"The captain of the merchant ship removed them to a government sloop last night, and the sailors thought they could board her and destroy the paper. Perhaps they could have done so, but every man of weight and standing was on the other side—John Watts, John Cruger, John Stevens, Robert Livingston, and others of consideration, talked themselves beyond speech trying to persuade the people to let the Stamps alone. There is a better way than fighting for them."

"Well, then?"

"The sailor men thought fighting the best way, and shouting, 'Captain Van Vroom to the rescue!' they went all through the city. They did not shout for me; they knew I would not lead them into such foolishness."

"But a brave man is our Captain, and one brave man knows another."

"At that hour, mother, he was a crazy man, and I could no more hold him than I could hold an armful of water."

"Crazy! Choose thy words better, Batavius."

"Well, then, at his age——"

"One thing I can tell thee, Batavius," interrupted the Captain; "at that hour, just twenty years old I felt. With those brave fellows behind me, I could have got into any ship." And as he spoke, Madame added a little more Holland to the glass she was stirring, and looking with proud affection into her husband's face, she said in her sweetest, tenderest voice—

"Drink, my Jan. A great soul thou art. And from any ship thou would have brought the Stamps, if the little souls would have let thee; Katrina knows that."

"And the consequences, mother? What the deuce of the consequences? Forgetting them is improper—and dangerous."

"My Jan never counts the danger. Mix yourself a glass, Batavius," and she pushed the bottle indifferently towards him.

"You see, mother," he answered, as he held the glass in one hand and the jug of hot water in the other; "you see, we must be reasonable; all the men of position and influence say that. No bloodshed is to be thought of, no overt act that would compel the soldiers to fight us. I can tell you that even General Gage is most anxious to prevent anything like an overt act."

"Tired am I of those two words. What does the government call the things we have been doing these many months?"

"Rioting, only rioting; but bloodshed means war—civil war."

"Well, then, I stand with my Jan and the sailors. I

would give the government an overt act, just as quick as I could."

"You talk like a woman. Every one who rushes into useless danger is a fool. This you may read in the Bible."

"A woman I am, but no fool. Yet I would have gone with the sailor men for the Stamps."

"Very easily that is seen, mother. But it might have been destruction of the city."

"Tush! Nothing of the kind. But I will tell thee how it is—people listen to lawyers and to what they call men of weight and influence, and very cautious are such men; they have offices to lose, and property that may be destroyed, and——"

"Yes, to such men I listen; that is my way; it is a sacred principle with me, for they give good advice."

"It is your business, that is what you mean."

"Well, then, my business it is. I am very anxious and particular about my business. On many Exchanges I am known for possessing a sound judgment. But so!" And he shrugged his big shoulders to indicate the hopelessness of sound judgment from Madame.

"If you had asked the poor citizens, or the Liberty Boys——"

"The poor men and the Liberty Boys had their say, and it is a great satisfaction for me to find that generally they think as I do. I will tell you, that when John Cruger failed with a crowd he was talking to, old Zebedee Willis won them with a few words. He stood up in his leather apron, and he had his paper cap on his head, and his big awl in his hand, and he said, 'Boys, not one man of us in fifty can climb into a boat joggling about on the river, but we can every man Jack of us get into the fort.' For one, I'll be eternally obliged to Cadwallader Colden if he will

put the bits of paper in the fort; they'll be mighty convenient to us there'; and the crowd that would not listen to Cruger's reasonable arguments, were delighted with old Zebedee's view of the case."

Madame did not answer Batavius. She was getting Jan his pipe and his slippers, and whispering kind little words as she did so. "I will go and get thee some pie, Jan—nice chicken pie with diamonds of salt pork and pastry in it, and there is some fresh celery, and rice pudding with raisins and cream sauce."

"Thou good, lovely Katrina!"

"And I will call Virginia, and tell her to come to see thee." Then turning to Batavius, she added, "See thou tease her not, Batavius; a very bad headache she had an hour ago."

"A great many times, mother, she has had a headache—that is not very interesting to me."

"She is not well this short time gone."

"I can see that myself. When we are married, no more headache she will have."

"Perhaps."

"Surely. I shall see to that."

And Katrina looked steadily into the face of Virginia's lover, and her eyes were opened, and she saw, as it were, in a flash of light, a miraculous glimpse of the real man; saw, or rather divined, the craven compromises, the sullen vanities, the secret brutalities, and unmanly dreams of revenge that lurked beneath the plausible, ordinary merits so visible to all.

For a moment she was astonished, but this feeling was quickly followed by one of anger, and she went hastily to her daughter's room. Then the sight of Virginia silently weeping as she stitched the band of linen in her hand turned her anger into pity. She went to her child's side, and

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stroked her pretty brown hair, and lifted her hand and caressed it.

"My dear one," she said, "thy father has come home, and a great deed he would have done this morning, if his own way he might have had."

"But what then?"

"I will tell thee. The sailors idle in harbor wanted to board the government sloop and destroy the Stamps, and they went through the street calling for thy father to lead them. And he was glad, and ready to go with the men, but the citizens would not have it so. They were afraid of bloodshed and civil war. Little spirit have they, I think. Batavius also was against thy father; that was because he would have been shamed into going with the Captain."

"Indeed no, moeder. Batavius would take his stand with the rich and respectable citizens. Many reasons, old and new, he would have ready for not going with his Captain and mates."

"Batavius is a coward."

"Batavius is a bad, cruel man; a coward he is not. My fader says he is a fierce fighter."

"For his life, or his ships, or his goods, Batavius will fight. But for freedom, and free men's rights, and for the rights of men and women not yet born, Batavius has no stomach for fighting. I say he is a selfish coward. Now make thyself pretty, and be very kind to thy father, and praise him a great deal, and thou need not praise Batavius at all—and thou need not be very pleasant to him. I know very well that he has been praising himself, and his great moderation, to John Cruger and John Watts, and the rest of the Worshipfuls. I know also that he has spoken with pity of thy father's rashness, and his own trouble in managing thy father. I know! I know! I wish, then, that

some one should make him shrink and shrivel to his own size. On thy father he builds himself."

"What does Batavius know of my good father's feelings and reasons?"

"He knows as much as a cheese-mite knows of the cheese-monger. That is all. Now make some haste, and whatever is thy best mood show thyself in it."

Virginia hardly needed this charge. Her mother's words had filled her with a spirit contradictory, provoking, and altogether charming. She bathed her face, and put on her best gray bodice, laced with blue ribbons, and a bow of blue ribbon in her hair, and a long chain of gold beads, which Batavius had given her, round her throat, and thus arrayed to tease or to conquer, she went slowly down the long stairway, singing as she went—

"A wanderer I, but ne'er could find
A girl like lovely Sally;
Who rears and culls and cries aloud
Sweet Lilies of the Valley!
For other girls I do not care,
If I am loved by Sally;
The pretty maid who cries aloud,
Sweet Lilies of the Valley!"

She sang the last line twice over as she opened the door, then with a low laugh of delight she ran to her father. "Oh, my fader! my fader!" she cried. "So great a spirit is in thy good heart! I have heard tell! Yes, indeed! every one talks of thy courage. Thou art so young, and so handsome, and so brave, that if a wife thou wanted to-day the prettiest girls in New York would smile on thee." And she kissed him, and put her arms across his shoulder, and kissed him again, and again, and then as she sat down by his side, she found time to send Batavius a ravishing

smile of recognizance, and to sweetly ask him to "tell her all about her father's brave intent."

"Indeed, my Virginia, as I have already told thy father, the intent was rash, not brave. I do not believe the Stamps could have been got; and, say they could, of what use at all would such a victory be? More Stamps are looked for every day, and more, and still more; an endless fight without any good results. That is nonsense, and every man of weight and importance was of my opinion."

"But yet you stood with your Captain and your mates? Oh, I am sure of that, Batavius."

"I was not with them, my Virginia. Their ways were against my principles, and my principles are sacred to me."

"Oh, dear! I am disappointed in you! Think of a sailor deserting his Captain and his comrades, and siding with a lot of cowardly landmen. I thought sailors stood by sailors, right or wrong?"

"They ought to," growled Jansen.

"I thought it was always 'one and all' with the men of the sea. Oh, Batavius, I am astonished! I am even ashamed of you. My father would have stood by you, if the sailors had shouted, 'Batavius to the rescue!' To the hilt of his cutlass he would have stood by you—yes, to the bottom of the sea—and that, principle or no principle. Batavius! Batavius! I do not believe you will ever again be able to get a crew for *The Arms of Stuyvesant*."

"My lovely one, there is no fear of that. I shall tell them I am Van Vroom's son-in-law. They will hire with me, for your sake. Your family name will find me a crew," and he waggled his head in a mockery of assurance.

She made a positive motion of denial, and added, "You would only be a relation by marriage. That is not much of a tie."

"Strongest tie in the world," he answered.

"But for business, it is not worth anything. Say you wanted money—you would not like to go to John Cruger, to borrow it, because you were Captain Van Vroom's son-in-law. Cruger would laugh at you, and——"

"I do not want money. I borrow from no one. Great Christopher, what an idea!"

"Well, then, say you hired men on my father's name; they would not obey you."

"Would they not? Little you know, my beauty. They would obey me on their hands and knees, or I would know the reason why. That is a pretty chain you are wearing."

"You gave it to me. Thank you! thank you! thank you, Batavius! I think I have said 'thank you' twenty-three times before; now the number is twenty-six. But it is a pretty chain. I don't mind saying 'thank you' twenty-six times for it."

And her smile was so charming, her pretty little balances and movements from foot to foot so fascinating, and the mimicry and intonations of her words so provoking and alluring, that Batavius was at her mercy. He adored and he hated her. He wished both to kiss and to strike her. She bewitched and she tortured him. Involuntarily he rose and attempted to embrace her—and she slipped into her father's arms.

"You are—you are the—the most provoking of women," he muttered—and then the outside door opened, and Arent and Harry Rutgers entered.

It was such a climax as Virginia most desired. She could now torment Batavius in a threefold manner, and with all the grace of girlhood, happy and unrestrained, she stepped forward to meet her brother and her friend.

"Have you a letter for me, Harry?" she asked. "Come, now, I know you have. Shall I pick your pocket for it, or will you deliver it at once, sir?"

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"Here is the letter, Virginia. I received it only one hour ago."

"I expected it. How delightful! It is from Lady Rose. Now you must all excuse my inattention. Nothing can be said until I have read my letter;" and then, happening to glance at Arent, she saw such a wonderful happiness and composure in his smiling face that she knew without a word, or look of confession, that Arent had a similar white paper comforter laying somewhere close to his heart.

At this moment Madame entered with the promised meal, and Virginia answered her unspoken question with an offer of the letter to read.

"No, no, but thou read it aloud," said Madame. "We are all friends here, and I must serve thy father first of all things."

Then Virginia spread out the sheet of thin perfumed paper, with its gilded edges, and tinted coat of arms, and read as follows—

"BEAUTIFUL AND BELOVED VIRGINIA:

"When you receive this message, I shall be on the sea, and doubtless wishing myself in a better place. For really, the ways of the sea would try the temper of a philosopher ten times my size. However, I have accommodated all my affairs to my utmost satisfaction. I must tell you that your last letter stopped to rest on its way, and I did not receive it until I was just about to sail. In a few days I will answer all its complaints with congratulations. When are you to be married? You must hurry your preparations, if I am to be your maid; for my father wishes to leave New York for London about the eighteenth of this month. I fancy, from late reports, England has caught the fever of revolt from America. Her fidgety ministers and her bad-tempered people are having a dog-and-cat time of it. Indeed, I could laugh at the blunders the English government is making, only that I do not presume to laugh at any thing that England does. Cross out the last sentence—the words were at my finger tips, and so they slipped through my pen. I have

not spoken of the weather yet, and what is a letter worth without reference to it? I can at least say that in Boston it has been giving full license to its temper—blowing east, and west, and every other kind of cold and sleet.

"My service to your delightful father and mother, and I beg also that you ask that witty Captain De Vries to remember me. What a clever, original creature he is! In my pen there is just ink enough to write the word *Arent*, and to assure you of my undying love.—ROSE HARLEY."

"A pretty letter," said Madame.

"A letter from the beautiful lady's heart," said the Captain.

Arent was too lost in happy feeling to have any such thing as an opinion, or a word to express one.

Harry thought it was a "less amusing scribble than usual," but, he added, "The Atlantic Ocean can put the merriest heart in the sulks."

"Sulks!" cried Batavius, rising and walking proudly about the room. "I consider that letter perfection. It is exactly what a real titled lady would write. She forgets no one. It is a great satisfaction to find myself remembered by a lady of the nobility. This is what comes of my politeness, and of my believing everything in the world is good. If I had been one of the discontented, complaining men, Lady Rose Harley would not have asked me to remember her. Upon my honor, I shall never forget a titled lady of such grace and condescension. To speak the truth, for I adore the truth, her message is very agreeable to me, and I think I deserve it; yes, I think I deserve it."

"Do be quiet, Batavius," said Harry.

"I remember distinctly, that I was fortunate enough to instruct Lady Rose Harley on some points. She approved all I said."

"Batavius, what are you peacocking about? Sit down. You annoy all of us—you take too much room."

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"Harry Rutgers, if you were in my place, if you had just received a very flattering and delicate compliment from a beauty of noble birth——"

"Do not make too many confessions, Batavius," said Virginia sweetly. "I warn you, I shall tell Lady Rose all that you say."

"I wish her to know how deeply I respect and admire her! That I must confess."

"Well, then," snapped Madame, "now that thy confession is made, will thou eat some chicken pie?"

"I have no objection, mother. Chicken pie is quite proper after such a fine compliment—witty! clever! original! Many times I have thought myself to have unusual qualities. Lady Rose has defined them. Also, she meant all she said, that I will maintain."

"Batavius, do be quiet."

"I will not be quiet, Harry. When a man is pleased, he may say so, I hope?"

"I hope I may remember all you have said, Batavius."

"I hope you will, Virginia. It is of some importance, no doubt."

"Come, come! Eat thy pie and forget the Lady Rose," and Madame spoke with scorn and temper. "Her compliments are only words. She was always making them, to all sorts of people—to my husband, to Arent, to the handsome Joris Artaveldt, yes, even to young Artaveldt's handsome father. I heard her that day on their race course. As for Governor Colden, and the young men she met at his house, and the English officers——"

"There now, Katrina, that is enough. A good pie thou brought me; let me eat it in peace. As for Lady Rose, good and pretty she is, and beautifully she dresses herself."

"Dresses herself! yes. In that way she makes men love her—men of sense, too."

"Indeed, Madame," said Harry Rutgers, "it is the men of sense who make the readiest and best fools in the world. A woman has trouble enough to win a coxcomb or a fool."

"Then a man of sense I am," added Batavius, "for if a lovely woman I see, my heart instantly beats at my lips. As I am a gentleman and a sailor, this is so—it is my way."

"It is a bad way, Batavius," said Arent. "For a true lover there is only one woman in all the world. For his mother's sake, many good women he respects, but only one woman he loves."

"Arent, that is not so," answered Batavius. "Many women who are not good, but who are very beautiful, are dearly loved. I have seen that."

"Well, then, Batavius, to love a bad woman because she is beautiful is simple baseness."

"Too much talk about love you are making," said the Captain. "If a man loves, he loves, and there it is. If he does not love, no person and no power can make him love, and there it is. The tale of war is now the tale to tell—the tale of love can wait. What news from the city, Harry?"

"Everything is now quiet, but to-morrow Governor Col-den ought to take oaths to carry the Stamp Tax into effect. The people are only waiting to see if he will dare to take it. I think he will."

"That is also what I think. Some say he is a coward, but, Harry, I have seen men who feared death but who did not fear to do their duty. I have seen men whose will compelled their bodies to do brave deeds."

"The spirit willing, the flesh weak, that is the great undoing, Captain," and Harry fell into gloomy retrospection. A silence followed, and Virginia rose and asked her

mother's leave to retire. "I have been good, moeder?" she whispered.

"Very good."

"May I go now?"

"Yes, go and sleep. Do not wake and cry. Thou wilt spoil thy eyes."

Then she kissed her mother and father, and gave her hand to Harry and Batavius. But Batavius followed her to the door, and as she stood with it half-open he held her by the arm, and as he whispered passionate words of love, he let his grasp close on her flesh so cruelly tight that she could not help a cry of pain. Madame looked up quickly, her face inquisitive and angry, and Harry rose and went towards Batavius."

"We are going now, Batavius," he said. "Come! I have no time to lose."

Virginia looked gratefully at Harry, and finding herself free, fled swiftly to her room. And as soon as the two men were outside the house, Harry asked angrily, "What were you doing, or saying, to Miss Van Vroom?"

"My own will," mumbled Batavius sullenly.

"You have shown a vile temper to-night, and I have a mind never to speak to you again."

This was a result Batavius did not wish. Both in a business and a social way Harry Rutgers was of importance to the captain of *The Arms of Stuyvesant*, so he answered suavely—

"You ought to excuse much, Harry, to a miserable lover. Virginia is too provoking."

"Miss Van Vroom is perfect. There is no fault in her."

"We have had a quarrel. I wanted to make it up—that is my way. I can not bear to quarrel. If I was in a vile temper, Harry, think only that I had a quarrel with

my sweetheart. All men know how that is. I dare say she is fretting about me now."

"I think it is very likely, after the black pinching you gave her. I can see and feel the cruel bruise."

"None of your business, is it, Harry Rutgers?"

"Captain De Vries, we will take different roads for the future"—and Harry, without further words, strode away at a pace Batavius did not care to follow.

In the meantime Virginia was dropping tears over the bruised arm as she bathed it in some medicated lavender water. She was as frightened of the man as if he was an ogre, and she lay awake many hours trying to form some plan of escape, if Rose failed her. For Rose's letter did not still her fears. Rose had promised so much, and there was yet no certainty that she had accomplished anything. This last letter was no more positive than her first, and oh, dear, how long, how long, she had been waiting! It was the end of October, and she was still uncertain and alone; the days were tides of care and fear, the nights endless, shadowy chasms, unbridged by any hope of escape. The girl was utterly wretched.

For a few hours her will had put her misery under her feet and she had apparently been happy and cheerful, but as soon as she was alone this false mood fell from her like a garment—fell heavy as lead to her feet. It was not only her hatred and terror of Batavius, or her anxiety about her marriage, that distressed her; there was a bitterer drop in the cup of her sorrow—it was Joris. He was thinking everything evil of her, and she did not deserve it. He had seen Batavius kiss her, and he did not know that it was a kiss without her knowledge or consent. It was misery to think of Joris, but oh, if she was forced to marry, she would have to cease thinking of Joris in any way. It would be a sin to think of him. She would have to bury every memory

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of him. Alas! she did not know what an impossible thing it is to bury alive the memories of love! They have such a terrible vitality, they constantly turn in their coffin, they return and return to their hiding place, they will not even be put out of mind.

The next day dawned at last, the day which the newspapers called the "last day of Liberty!" It was a dark, wintry dawn, full of gloomy forebodings. The Captain went early into the city, and came home early with a headache and a heartache.

"Not long did thou stay to-day, Jan. Glad am I to see thee." And Madame smiled her approval very pleasantly.

"Long enough I stayed, Katrina. I saw the Governor take oaths to carry out the Stamp Act, then I came home to thee. My heart was heavy."

"Well, Jan, he has sworn to make us use the Stamps; can he do it?"

Jan laughed. "He can not, Katrina, nor can he find a man in the city, or out of the city, who will dare to make the attempt. Also, he is making the people very angry, so foolishly he acts."

"How then?"

"No one wants to kill the old man, if he will do what is just and right; yet John Watts told us, he was fortified as if he had been at Bergen-op-Zoom when the French besieged it with one hundred thousand men. That is what makes the people's blood run high and hot—that, more than anything else. The papers to-day are all dated 'October thirty-first, the last day of Liberty.' I like not such words. It is not the last day of Liberty; no, indeed! It is the dawn of Liberty!"

"If a little sleep thou would take, Jan, it would be good for thee. So weary was thy step, so pale thy face."

"Yes, I will go to sleep. To-night there is a great meet-

ing of the merchants at Burns' Tavern. We are going to strike another blow at the trade of England. Yes, yes. She will see. She will feel. We will shut up all her mills, and turn her weavers and mechanics hungry into the streets."

"The poor people! Not their fault it is."

"The poor people will make the King and Parliament listen to them. They will not listen to us. Far away are we, but thousands of starving English workmen will call at their doors with no runaway knock. They will be forced to answer them. Yes, indeed!"

In the evening, quite refreshed by his sleep, Jan was among the first of the great company of merchants who that night met to consummate their war with the trade and industries of England. They were going to compel the liberty of the English workingmen, to fight the tyranny of the English government. It was a thoughtful, dignified meeting, and after it adjourned between two and three hundred of the largest importers and dealers in New York signed their names to the most radical agreement they could frame.

"A strong paper it is," said Jan to Katrina, as they sat together discussing the proceedings, "and Judge Robert Livingston said that England would suffer more by it in one year than the Stamp Tax, or any other tax, could ever recompense."

"Well, then, Jan, what of it?"

"It renewed and made more stringent our first agreement—no English goods are to be imported, and no English clothing is to be worn. Lawyers are not to issue a stamped writ, merchants are not to clear out a vessel which has British relations, and coast vessels are to enter and depart without stamped papers. The courts are enjoined to sit without reference to the Stamp Act, and newspapers are to be printed and sold in defiance of it. By common and

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nearly universal consent, business is to go on as if no Stamp Act existed."

"Some there are who will not mind your agreements—Alexander Semple, for instance."

"Well, then, Alexander Semple will have to shut his shop, and abuse the Liberty Boys and the Colonial Congress in his own house, Katrina."

"Against the colonists Janet Semple will not let him speak one word. Also, I have heard, that she has an ugly little dog she calls 'King George,' and cross words, and a kick or two, the creature gets if the Elder dares to say the Liberty Boys do anything wrong. And that the Elder does not like, for he picked the dog up starving, and so has him in a kind of protection. Little Katherine Van Heemskirk told me about 'King George.' She says the creature runs to the cellar or stable whenever he hears the words 'Stamp Act.' Of Janet he is afraid."

Jan. laughed, and then remarked in a pointed manner, "Others are afraid of Janet, as well as 'King George.'"

"A very dignified, masterful man is Elder Semple," said Katrina.

"Very—when he is in kirk, or on the street, or in his office. There's a difference when he is at his own fireside. But that is a common occurrence, Katrina."

"Not your case, Jan."

"No, thank God! My rights I get at home and abroad."

"Was then this clear, strong paper of the Congress all? Over the same ground you went, Jan?"

"New ground we took up, yes, indeed. A committee has been appointed to get the merchants of Philadelphia, Boston, and other cities throughout the colonies to stand with us, and enter into our agreement in all points."

"Will they, Jan?"

"I think they will. I am satisfied. To-morrow is the

great day. We shall see then whether Colden dare use a stamped paper. I must be early on the street to-morrow."

But early as Jan was astir, he found the streets crowded, and the crowd watching every movement with an intense sense of the importance of not suffering a single stamp to be used. All night long, and from every quarter, men had been pouring into New York. General Gage, who watched this march of patriots, said "they came by thousands"—in boatloads over the North and East rivers, and in carriages of all kinds, down the thoroughfares of the island—old men and young men, rich men and poor men, whoever knew the meaning of the word Freedom, and was able to carry a musket, were on the streets of New York when the first of November, 1765, dawned. As the gray light came the bells of the city met it with muffled peals, and the beating of unbraced drums—while from every trading ship on the river the flags slowly rose to half-mast and hung drooping and motionless in the damp, misty air. The effect upon the multitude was enraging. A kind of sobbing, angry cry rang through the streets of the city they loved and were so proud of. By every token she appealed to them. Her merchants ruined, her ships idle, her stores closed, she stood despoiled and ready for the oppression declared against her. Would they permit it? No! and a great *No!* was that sobbing cry that startled the crowded streets at the dawning.

During the day the crowd constantly increased, and the bells and drums—muffled and melancholy voices—never ceased reminding it of the purpose for which it was there. Letters were sent, letters were mysteriously found, placards spoke from every wall, and orators at every corner were threatening destruction of life and property to any one who should in any way give a stamp, or take a stamp, or delay business for the want of a stamp. A letter addressed to Governor Colden, which had been posted in the Merchants'

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Coffee House all day, was delivered to him towards evening by an unknown hand. It assured him of his fate if he did not solemnly make oath that he would not execute the Stamp Act.

As the day waned, the crowd constantly increased, and the tumult of it was terrifying. Katrina and Virginia were running to and from the garden gate constantly, for they were sick with fear, and had seen no one all day to relieve their anxiety. But about dark Jan came home. He was pale with excitement and trembling with fatigue.

"On my feet all day I have been, Katrina," he said. "Now, then, say something, and give me something to comfort me."

Then the two women with many little kindnesses satisfied his wants, and he began to talk.

"A dreadful day it has been, Katrina, but not one stamp has been used, that is certain. I will also say certainly not one stamp ever will be used. To-day the people would have hung any man who had a stamp in his possession."

"Is the trouble over then, Jan?"

"Beginning it is, only beginning. Colden got a letter to-day which threatened his life unless he swore not to execute the detestable Act."

"Did he?"

"What he did was to send for the troops from Turtle Bay, and march them through the crowd to the fort. He frightened no one, and a very unpleasant march the troops had, for they were jeered and taunted at every step, and had been forbidden by General Gage to answer any insult offered them."

"A wise man is General Gage."

"That is true. If Colden were as wise it would be better. What think you he did, in answer to the letter threatening his life?"

"You told us, fader," said Virginia, "that he sent for the troops from Turtle Bay."

"Yes, and then he ordered men to spike the Copsy Battery cannon. They marched down Whitehall Street, and did their cowardly work to the contemptuous words and curses of the people."

"But did not the cannon belong to the government? Why, then, did they spike it, fader?"

"To the merchants of New York the cannon belonged. I had my share in them. And I would like to have turned them on Cadwallader Colden. Very good and very rich men found out at four o'clock to-day that they could swear as well as any blackguard, and I do fear Jan Van Vroom was among them."

"And oh, Jan, what will be the end of it?"

"God knows, Katrina. The Mayor and Aldermen are powerless. Very anxious and troubled are they. I left them in council at the City Hall, with Judge Livingston, James Duane, and other lawyers."

"Talking and counseling is no good."

"No good is anything unless Colden will make some concessions. The people have gone far, and they will go further. *Christus!* They care not how far they go. To death they will go, rather than have one stamp used. I heard Colonel Rutgers talking to a crowd on the Bowling Green, and in a great passion he was. 'It would be stamps everywhere,' he said; 'on every bit of paper we touched, stamps! On our newspapers, stamps! On our receipts, stamps! On our bills of exchange, stamps! Wherever we turned in our warehouses or stores, stamps! On our marriage papers, even, stamps! Yes, even on our burial papers, stamps! We should go crazy, friends!' he cried out, 'for every stamp would burn into our hearts, as the hot iron burns the brand of slavery into the flesh. Will you carry in your pockets the

sign of your being bondmen to a power three thousand miles away? Freeborn Americans, will you do that?' And there was a shout of 'No! we will not!' Such a shout, Katrina! It lifted me off my feet, and Rutgers went on: 'Long hands have the British Ministry—Townshend, Grenville, and the lot of them—they can pick your pockets three thousand miles away from you—damn them! They can send six inches of paper to do the deed for them. They are a conclave of shuffling sots, and mean mercenary liars, and inefficient, sap-headed fools! They smack of every sin that has a name. And they rob us by what they call an Act of Parliament! Well, then, by an Act of the Colonial Congress—a Non-Importation Act—we will pay them in their own coin. That is fair enough, is it not, men?' A ringing shout answered him, and on he went, 'America is the half-brother of all the world, and the golden girdle of our trade binds us to every land on earth. We won't have our trade bound and gagged and killed by paper stamps! No, we will not! By Heaven, we will not! We will not see truth turned into a lie, and justice and law trampled under foot!' And as he spoke, Katrina, our hearts swelled, and to the very skies they were lifted up. And as home I walked, I walked on air, and about David's God I thought, how He was a man of war, and Lord of Hosts, and to myself I said, 'David's God is the God we want now. He gave us iron to make arms, so then He did not expect men to be slaves.'

"But, fader, that is in the Old Testament. The New Testament says God is love to all."

"Well, then, Virginia, the Old Testament is all right for our enemies. We will keep the New Testament for our friends. The Old Testament is for those who lie to us and rob us. Good enough it is for them. Now I will sleep

a little. Much life men give away when their blood flows so hot, and their hearts beat so strong and high."

So Jan went to the sofa, and soon fell on sweet, deep sleep. And Madame turned her wheel at the fireside, and Virginia sat still, with closed eyes and folded hands, and there was not a sound in the room but the ticking of the clock and the crackling of the burning logs on the hearth. But about eight o'clock there was a noise from the city that made both women alert, and Virginia went to the door, and by a motion of her hand called her mother. The roar of angry human voices, the sound of hammers, the blaze and crackle and smell of fire were all too evident. But they warned each other by emphatic motions not to awaken the weary Captain; and so sat together silent and fearful until about ten o'clock, when Arent came noisily into the room. Then the Captain awoke and asked hastily—

"Now, then, what is the matter?"

"Fader, the city has got beyond control. The men who have come to-day from far and near will not be talked to. They came to fight, and are determined to fight. They went to the fort, they pounded the gate for admittance, they threw bricks and stones against the walls, they placed their hands on the tops of the ramparts, and dared the guards to fire; they filled the air with shouts of vengeance."

"Speak, Arent! has there been fighting?"

"Not a word or a shot answered them."

"That Gage must be a ——"

"No, no, Jan," said Madame; "he is a wise man. In his heart, too, he may have some sympathy with the Americans."

"Not he! No, indeed!"

"I have heard thee say something about a brave man feeling always with the under dog in the fight."

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"We are not the under dog! No! Go on, Arent."

"The Sons of Liberty led by Isaac Sears——"

"Sears, of course. He is always baring his arms, and shouting 'Come on, boys!' And pray what did Sears do?"

"He took the crowd to the Common. There they erected a movable gallows and hung Colden's effigy on it amid threatening shouts. Another effigy of Colden was placed in a chair, and carried by a screaming crowd all through the streets of the city. After a time they carried the gallows to within ten feet of the gates of the fort. It still held the effigy of Colden, though it was torn and riddled with shot. There they left it swinging."

Jan set his mouth tight, but made no remark, and it was Virginia who said—

"It was a shame! Governor Colden only did what he believed to be his duty. I am sorry for him."

"I am not sorry," contradicted Jan. "Go on, Arent. Is his Excellency's effigy swinging there yet?"

"No. The last offense of the Governor has been to make the soldiers take down the fort fence facing Broadway, so as to expose the citizens to the fire of the fort, if it was determined to fire on them."

"*Sacrament!* What a childish bit of spite and aggravation!"

"It made the citizens furious. The boards had been gathered into a pile, and the idea of burning them came to every man at the same moment. They broke into Colden's coach-house, took out his fine English chariot, and placing it, and the gallows, the chair, the effigies, and every movable they could find in the coach-house upon the fence boards, they set the whole on fire."

"That was bad work," said Katrina; "foolish work, too. I like it not."

"*Fiddlesticks!*" shouted Jan impatiently. "Did they stop there, Arent?"

"No, many went with the mob so far, but when they became unmanageable and burned all of Major James' rich furniture, knocked to pieces the doors, windows, and partitions in his home, destroyed his summer house, and desolated his beautiful gardens, the better class deserted the mob."

"Nothing better Major James had any right to expect. He and his men have made the citizens the butt of their evil tongues. Railing and mockery cost some money. He owed New Yorkers a big bill. To-night he paid it. That is well. I have no objections. What then, Arent?"

"I came here. I could not find thee, fader, in the crowd, and I was uneasy. I feared for thee."

"If I had been awake, then I had been looking for thee. I would have said to myself, Arent is so young and careless, into some foolishness, or into some danger, he will be going. I must find the boy and bring him home to his good careful mother. Afraid I feel for him," and with these words the Captain walked with an air of authority and confidence across the room, adding as he lifted his pipe—

"Katrina, your boy is safe. Feed him now, and see that to bed he goes. Yes, yes, see to it. The bed is safer than the streets for a young man, when a riot is on hand. They get frightened, the youngsters! They lose their good sense, and do what is not right or profitable—burning furniture—destroying beautiful gardens—making effigies—hanging a rag man—all folly!" he muttered audibly, puffing his pipe between every sentiment.

Arent flushed and flashed, but a glance from his mother settled the question, and he answered, "You are right, fader. Something nice to eat my moeder will give me, and then will come the good sleep. To-morrow will be another dav."

"That is so. Good-night, my boy. To-morrow may give us what was kept from us to-day. We can not cross the stile till we come to it. That is the truth."

But in this case to-morrow brought no rest and no hope to the insurgent citizens. Early in the morning the Governor was assailed by threatening letters. He was told that nothing but the Stamps would satisfy the people, and that if they were not delivered to them, the fort would be attacked that night. Colden sent for his Councillors. Only a small minority came, and they advised him to leave the distribution of the Stamps to the new governor, Sir Henry Moore, who was hourly expected.

In the meantime message after message arrived from the people, assembled in street conclaves, and the old man was in a fever of passion and terror. As he walked the floor of his room in the fort, he wrung his hands, and railed at the Ministry, which had left him to face the consequences of their folly. Yes, at that hour, he saw the folly of the Stamp Act, and felt wronged and indignant enough to say what he saw. Again he shifted his anger to Sir Henry Moore. "He is a sneaking coward!" he cried. "He knows the strait I am in, and he dilly-dallies at sea to keep out of trouble and danger. He ought to have been here weeks ago. It is only right to leave him to do the work he was sent to do."

Acting on this decision he wrote to the Mayor and Aldermen of the city, saying, "The Lieutenant-Governor will not distribute any Stamps, but will leave the matter to Sir Henry Moore's action." Further, he offered to place the Stamps on board the man-of-war commanded by Captain Kennedy, if the Captain would receive them; which Captain Kennedy refused to do. Night was approaching, nothing had been settled, and Sears shouted to the multitude—

"We will have the papers! In twenty-four hours we will have them!" and they answered him with *Hurrahs!*

The Mayor and Aldermen were in the greatest anxiety, and Livingston and Duane—being sure disturbances would begin among the sailors—personally visited the captains of the ships, begging their assistance in keeping the peace. They would make no promises. Nearly all of them were on the side of the colonists. Men of the highest character and influence patrolled the streets, entreating the unruly element to wait a little longer. Their arguments were helped by the fact that the next day was Sunday. The crowd flocked to the churches. They wished to hear what the domines and the minister of Trinity would say. The latter, a learned, conservative gentleman, preached what he had been licensed to preach, that only; politics, with their unruly elements, passed not the door of the holy place. But in the Middle Dutch Kirk, Doctor Laidlie fully satisfied those who had gone to hear a sermon suitable to the times. Van Vroom and Batavius were present, but the ladies of the family were—as Madame put it—"indisposed." It was the second calling of the banns of marriage between Batavius and Virginia, and Batavius was very angry at Virginia's indisposition. He had calculated on making an impression, had satisfied himself as to the proper expression of his face and attitude, and considered the exact spot at which he might suitably offer Virginia his arm. He could not help feeling that he had been slighted by Virginia's absence. He could not understand why it should be an unpleasant ordeal, nor did he believe Virginia, that it was not considered fashionable to attend the calling of one's own marriage banns. Therefore he was angry and far more disposed to discuss the rite than the sermon.

"We were called amidst a lot of nobodies," he said in a temper; "and our names were not spoken out clearly. I say they were slurred over, and no more attention paid to Batavius De Vries and Virginia Van Vroom than to John

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Bedloe and Cornelia Hahn; and Bedloe is one of our teamsters, and Cornelia a servant girl in the Rutgers family. I wonder respectable people tolerate such ways."

"They do not," answered Virginia. "Respectable people would wait for a license. I do not intend to tolerate them."

"Next Sunday, my Virginia, is the third and last time, and you must tolerate them for once. It is not proper for me to go alone. It does not look as if you appreciated me."

"I shall not tolerate them next Sunday."

"Then I shall not go to kirk either."

"I would not, if I was you."

Jan did not like this conversation, and he interrupted it by turning to Katrina, and saying with enthusiasm, "Katrina, we had a wonderful sermon from Doctor Laidlie. He knew what the crowded kirk meant, and no one went empty away. When he opened The Book, he held up his hand, there was an instant and a great silence, and then home he sent his text to our hearts. *The Lord executeth righteousness for all that are oppressed.* There was not a movement, a pin you could have heard fall, but when he added '*All! A great All that, friends,*' you might have felt the sob and the stir go all through the silence, and make it tremble. Katrina, for one moment I felt as if the congregation was going to break out into shouting or singing. That was how I felt myself. Many grand words he said, bold, straight words, that struck from heart to heart, and we all of us came away comforted and strengthened."

"Well, then, Jan, hast thou forgotten them all?"

"Do I go to kirk to hear, and forget? No. He told us we had a right to complain—that the voice of the people was the sword that guarded them. He said we were speaking now, not only for ourselves, but for the unnumbered generations to come; and not only for our generations, but

for the generations of every race and country. 'For this cause,' he cried, 'God showed free men the way to America. He gave us the New World, to comfort the sorrow and slavery of the Old World'; and he said further that 'if any selfish motive we have in crying "Liberty" we were traitors to Liberty. With all our hearts we must serve Liberty, and take no wages from her; more than that, we must give her our faculties, our gold, our life if it was necessary, and not only give, but give gladly, give with both hands, because a cheerful giver is the only one that the Ancient Giver loves, or knows anything about.' And then I looked at John Reparreck, and Bram Borger, and John Skelton, and George Boothby, and others like them, and I was pleased in my heart they should hear such strong words, for every one knows——"

"Then, Jan, if every one knows, there is no need for thee to say what they know. Scarce one heart in the whole world rings true to the very bottom."

"Astonished am I at thee, Katrina. Does not thy husband's heart ring true?"

"Ask thyself, not me."

And Katrina looked at him steadily, and he answered her not a word. For what man, going on any warfare, does not have little withdrawals of confidence in his cause, little doubts and abandonments, and worst of all, fears that he is serving virtue, and obeying conscience, and will get nothing for it?

Dinner and the entrance of Arent put an end to these uncomfortable reflections.

"Where hast thou been, Arent?" asked Jan.

"Here and there, fader."

"Is the *Manhattan* ready?"

"In two or three days."

"What is the matter with the ship?"

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"She needs some calking, and both oakum and pitch have been hard to get."

"The delegates are impatient to be off."

"That I can not help;" and Madame looked at her son, and clearly divined that Arent's words did not ring true to the bottom. She was sure that it was not the seams of the boat that was delaying the *Manhattan*. And catching Virginia's glance at her brother, she saw also that Virginia had the same persuasion. And she smiled scornfully at her suspicion. Arent was a passionate patriot. Oh, yes, but he was also a passionate lover. And for a minute or two there was no conversation; all were busy either with their own thoughts, or with the delicious pot-pie of light boiled pastry and quails' breasts. But very soon the dominating subject was again opened.

"I think all is quiet to-day, Arent," said the Captain. "I saw only a few companies of the Boys, as we came from the kirk."

"Not very quiet, fader. A letter was sent this morning to the Custom House promising death to the officials if they did not clear out vessels as usual. And a paper has been posted all over, telling the people to forget the peaceable talk of a certain gentleman last night, and be ready to storm the fort on Tuesday morning, November the fifth."

"Who was this paper signed by, Arent?"

"*The Sons of Neptune.*"

"I thought so."

"If it is obeyed, fader——"

"It means civil war."

Governor Colden understood this result as plainly as any one, and very early on Monday morning he sent for Mayor Cruger, and some of the most influential citizens, and offered to renew his solemn promise "not to distribute any of the stamped paper." Arent came in with this news while

his father was eating breakfast, early Monday morning. The Captain rose instantly and Madame followed him.

"Oh, Jan! My Jan, stay at home to-day!" she cried. "Jan, I am sick! I fear for thee! The sailors will persuade thee! Oh, my Jan, leave us not. Saturday was too much, we were ill with fears and suspense. Jan, stay with us to-day!"

"I can not stay. I will not stay, Katrina. What is it you women want? That I should be called a coward? Worse, that I should call myself a coward?" and he began to fuss about his beaver cap and coat. Then silently Katrina helped to put them on, and silently he left the house. But when half-way to the gate he remembered the pale faces of his wife and child and, turning, saw them watching him. Then he went back and said, "Kiss me once, dear ones. Home to my dinner I will come, if it be possible."

Evidently Jan did not find it possible. It was quite dark when he returned. And Arent was with his father, and the two men were in a temper of inconceivable triumph. Their voices—thrilled through with tones of victory—were heard afar off; and Katrina and Virginia threw wide the door and waited impatiently for their entrance.

"We have got the Stamps!" shouted Jan.

"They are in the City Hall, moeder!"

"The Mayor and the Aldermen have them!"

"And they will take good care of them!"

"Till we send them back to Lady Britannia!"

"I'll take them on the *Manhattan* if the people want me to!"

So from father to son the words rushed rattling on one another, and were soon emphasized by Katrina's and Virginia's cries of delight, and the hurrying feet of the women bringing in the *avondmaal*, and the tinkling of silver on crystal as Madame hurriedly mixed the spirit and hot water

she knew the Captain needed. And for a little while the joy was all a confusion, short ejaculations, cries of wonder and pleasure, bold expressions, current words that rang well, and flew from heart to heart. Then, as the men felt the serenity and satisfaction of work well accomplished, and fatigue, hunger, and cold vanished, they began to talk more reasonably, and Katrina asked—

“Well, then, Jan, did the Mayor and the gentlemen answer the Governor’s call this morning?”

“Yes, and very strong they must have talked to him, for he positively renewed the promise made on Saturday, not to distribute the Stamps. Then at all the usual places notices were posted, telling the people that the Governor had promised Mayor Cruger, Robert Livingston, John Stevens and Beverly Robinson that he would not issue, nor suffer to be issued, any of the Stamps then in Fort George.”

“And that satisfied them?”

“Satisfied them? No, indeed! Listen, Katrina. Underneath every notice of the Governor’s promise they posted another notice, requesting the people to gather in the ‘Fields’ to-morrow, and come ready armed to storm the fort.”

“What next, Jan?”

“Mayor Cruger then wrote to Colden, proposing that the Stamps should be given into the charge of the City Corporation. The Governor was offended, and did not answer. Then a deputation went to see him, and renewed the Mayor’s offer. His council advised him to yield. He pleaded his oath to the King. They told him he must give the Stamps to the people, or the people would take them; and then great loss of life there would be. He said no doubt his life would be the first taken. No one contradicted him. He was in a desperate strait. To the old man the question was his honor or his life. Decide he could not. Hour after

hour passed, and every hour the insistent clamor for the Stamps grew fiercer and louder. At length four o'clock came, an immense crowd was waiting at the City Hall, and calling for the result. No time was there to lose, not a moment. Mayor Cruger and the Aldermen hurried to the fort, and told the Governor 'the people would bear no longer delay. It was the Stamps or the fort.' Colden wrung his hands, lost his temper, and then in despair appealed to General Gage."

"And what said the General?"

"The General said the first gun fired from the fort would be the beginning of war. Colden was terrified by the question he had to solve."

"Well he might be," said Katrina.

"Oh, but I am sorry for the Governor!"

"No, no, Virginia! Be sorry for the thousands of men waiting in the cold and rain, since seven o'clock this morning until four o'clock this afternoon, for that man's faltering and paltering, his scruples and cowardly hesitations. Why did he not do right at once?"

"That is true, Jan. Did General Gage make him do right?"

"Could any man make him do right bravely? No. But it was growing dark. The people were desperate. Their tumult sounded louder. The Governor was like a man out of his senses. He wept, he walked about, he sat down, he trembled with fatigue, and at last, when he could hardly speak, he told Mayor Cruger he would 'give up the Stamps to the City's Corporation.'"

"Oh, fader, it was a hard case! Yes, we must be sorry for him, and for his wife, and his daughters. They were kind to your Virginia, fader."

"Well, then, it was a hard case—for *him*. But the welfare of many thousands must not be taken, to let one man

have his way. Unjust is that. At four o'clock, Arent and I were at the City Hall. Nine-tenths of the men in the city were waiting there. Cold and wet they were, but too angry and anxious to care for the rain and the wind. Weary of waiting and watching, they began shouting for the result of their offer. Too long they had been kept. I myself wondered at their patience. Louder and louder grew their demand, 'Would the Governor give them the Stamps, or would he not?' And slowly, but surely, a movement I can not describe or explain, stirred them. I said to myself— '*It is too late;* does not the wicked old man see he is going to give the city up to fire and sword?' Katrina, I was sick at my heart."

"Oh, Jan! My poor Jan!"

"Then I heard some one calling, calling loud, and Arent said to me, 'Mayor Cruger is hurrying toward us, fader,' and the next moment every one was watching him, and a dead silence followed. No one spoke, or stirred; men hardly breathed. Very soon the edge of the crowd caught his words, and they flew from mouth to mouth like wildfire— '*The Stamps are to be put in our charge! Come with me to the fort and get them!*' Then he turned back to the fort, and the multitude followed him; all silent, Katrina; not a word from any one. That was so strange. It was like a dream, yes, it was. The Aldermen were waiting at the gate for us, and the Mayor and Aldermen and the chief citizens carried out the parcels of Stamps. In these hands, thy Jan carried one package; and when they were all ours, the Mayor led the procession, and the men carrying the Stamps came next, and the multitude followed. Not silent then! Oh, no! With shouts of triumph we carried them to the City Hall. And there they are. The Lord of Hosts be praised!"

"And after that, Jan?"

"To his home, or his post, every man went quietly and gratefully. Yes, I will say again, gratefully. This night, New York will sleep well."

In fact, the Van Vroom household slept overwell. They were an hour behind the usual breakfast time, and Madame was worried and even cross.

"Monday was a day lost," she fretted, "and Tuesday just as bad; to-day is Wednesday, and to-morrow Thursday, and the next day Friday, and not a handkerchief of the washing out yet."

"Never mind the washing, Katrina."

"Jan, what art thou talking about? Do without the washing, we can not. Without dinners we may go, and without hot bread for supper, but without the washing we can not go."

"We have the Stamps! Is not that enough?"

"No, it is not. Clean linen must be had, and dinners, and hot bread there must be, or else black looks, and tempers, and plenty of all kinds of grumbling. I know!"

"If thou had gone to kirk last Sunday, Katrina, thy temper had been better to-day."

"My temper has nothing to do with the kirk. It was not proper for Virginia and me to be in kirk last Sunday. I have told thee that twenty times."

"Good gracious, wife!"

"Also, I like not Doctor Laidlie. What right has he in a Dutch pulpit? Of the Amsterdam classes he talks, but from Edinburgh he comes."

"Well, then, you women were all crying out for a sermon in English, and some of you going to Trinity for it. Only to please the women was Doctor Laidlie brought. Nothing but English sermons you wanted."

"English!" said Virginia scornfully.

"Yes, English, Virginia."

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"Fader, you mean Scotch."

"English, Miss."

"Lady Rose speaks English properly. Doctor Laidlie speaks like Elder Semple. He has the Scotch accent. It is vulgar."

"And his faith is not pure," said Katrina.

"And, moeder, he stands too stiff in the pulpit."

"True, Virginia, and also he is too short in his applications."

"And he does not use his hands well, moeder."

"And every one says that his walk and carriage is not as serious as it should be."

"He has red hair, too, and little of it," added Virginia, with a sly look at her father's amazed countenance.

"His calls, too, are visitations. He never knows when to go, and he muddles and puddles in every one's household affairs, though late and slovenly are his own."

"But the worst of all, moeder, is that he wears spectacles. Ladies don't like to be looked at through spectacles—it is not pleasant."

Jan could stand this conversation no longer. "Ho! Ho! Ho!" he laughed—"Ladies do not like spectacles, do not like to be looked at through glass—It is not pleasant. What are poor old men to do?" and he began tapping the edge of the japanned tea tray with the back of his knife, and to the time he kept, repeating some lines of a popular song of the day—

"We'll petition George the Third,
Our petition must be heard,
Poor old men!"

Immediately Virginia joined him,

"George the Third is deaf and blind,
Your petition he'll not mind,
Poor old men!"

"Poor old men!" chorused Madame in a disdainful, mocking sympathy, and then all joined in a gust of hilarious laughter, which blew the shadows and the little irritations far, far away.

And in the midst of it, the door was pushed softly open, and Lady Rose entered.

CHAPTER TEN

THE UNKNOWN HELPER

WITH all her charms around her Lady Rose entered. Her smile made sunshine on her face, her eyes rained sweet persuasion, her exquisite form was clothed with captivating fitness in a blue cloth suit—its jaunty pilot coat lined with white satin, and trimmed with gold lace and gold buttons bearing the Harley crest. On her head was a sailor's cap of blue cloth, gold-banded and tasseled, and at her throat there was a small golden anchor fastening the flowing ends of her white satin neckerchief.

Swift and graceful as a bird, her movements gave no one time to meet her. She was at the breakfast table when Virginia rose with a joyful cry of welcome. She lifted her mouth for Virginia's kiss, and as their faces touched found a moment in which to whisper—"Everything is to our wish, my dear." Then she was standing between the Captain and Madame and they were holding her hands and giving her pleasant words of welcome.

"Sit down with us, my dear," said Madame; "a cup of coffee will do you good."

"Indeed," she cried with a pretty exaggeration, "I am thankful to be again among the affectionate mortals who drink coffee. Pray let me have a cup—sweet, and hot, and strong. I am perishing for it."

"But no! You must have had coffee in Boston?"

"I assure you, Madame, the Bostonians drink little coffee. Tea is the fashionable drink. Now and then I smelled the dear little brown berry, and at intervals I even tasted it,

but coffee like this, Madame! Oh, no! I think indeed the good Bostonians are suspicious of coffee, and to be candid, I own they have reasons."

"If they get it from Java, it is all right," said the Captain. "Let them buy Menado—that is a good mark. Padang I like not. I will not say much for the Jamaica and Brazilian berries; only the Javanese have the true flavor—hot, spicy, inspiring, every little berry has a spirit in it. Often in a man's life a cup of good Java coffee is better than a glass of Hollands—well, then, it is very near as good."

"Faith, Captain! I would not say as much as that. Coffee is a dangerous drink, especially in such times as these."

"Dangerous! All nonsense! Our Liberty Boys will tell you how much help and comfort there is in coffee."

"But, Rose," asked Virginia, "why is coffee specially dangerous in these times?"

"Because the little spirit in the berries is a radical, rebellious spirit. Just as soon as men get dissatisfied, and begin to talk treason, and riot and rebel, they fly to the coffee houses. They must have coffee. Look at the New York merchants!—every one knows that all their treason was hatched at Burns' coffee house, and the Merchants' coffee house, and such like places. It is the same in London. The plotters against the government always sit at little tables in some disreputable Covent-Garden coffee house—and over the hot, spicy, unreasonable drink, talk themselves mad about liberty, and the rights of the people."

"My word!" cried the Captain, "I never heard the like. What a pot of mischief thou hast been brewing every morning, Katrina."

"Yes, and you see what has come of it," answered Rose, nodding her head with an air of absolute conviction. "In plain truth, coffee is a treasonable drink. It makes men dis-

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satisfied and unruly. Upon my honor, a naughty drink, sir, a naughty drink!"

"But you like it, my dear, you like it—hot, strong, and sweet—how is that?" asked Madame.

"I own the fault, Madame. It is my temper. Naturally I am unreasonable and unruly. I like the taste of these sins, as also I like coffee. Will Madame permit me to drink another cup—hot, strong, and sweet?"

By this time Virginia was weary of Rose's badinage. Her anxiety about her own affairs was so great that she could hardly bear the loitering at the breakfast table. She wondered at her father's interest in such an absurd subject, and her mother's tolerance and even enjoyment of the conversation astonished her still more. With eyes full of pathetic entreaty she looked into her friend's face. Rose only answered with an assuring smile, as she sipped her coffee with her spoon, and kissed her own lips with the frank gusto and pleasure of a child. Her apparent indifference fretted Virginia; she had come to that moment of tension in which it is a relief to say an unpleasant thing. Virginia said it of the delaying drink, "she was sure coffee was quarrelsome—even selfish and ill-natured—she had often seen it cause unkind feelings among women, as they sat and drank it."

"Such foolish words you talk, Virginia," interrupted Madame. "It is a good spirit that dwells in the little brown berry. So social, so kind, so generous! Yes, that is so! Over their coffee men may shout Freedom! and make plans to overthrow tyranny; but as sure as my name is Katrina Van Vroom, no men plan a murder, or a burglary, over a cup of good coffee. Coffee is a good moral drink. Good men drink coffee."

"We will allow its goodness, Madame, and at any rate it is the drink of clever men who write books. What kind of people write books? Are they moral and respectable?" and

to the last three words she gave an air and tone that said as plainly as speech, "Be patient. I have not forgotten Batavius."

Virginia was comforted by them, and she answered Rose's question in a manner not anticipated. "Miss Colden told me, Rose, that *you* wrote pretty verses, and that her father thought you might write novels and love stories very well."

"You should not have let Miss Colden slander me, Virginia. Rose Harley write books! And of all indiscretions, write poetry! Sure, if I did not sleep for a three months, I should never come to that pass! And if it were really so, my friends ought not to let me go abroad—the next of my caprices might be the state of matrimony"—and she drew Virginia's head close, and whispered a few words so softly in her ear that only one of them, "Arent," was distinguishable. Both girls laughed, and Rose looked round the table with such speaking, beaming eyes that Madame was non-plussed, and let the coffee she was pouring into the Captain's cup overflow the brim. For in that steady glance something was told with all the swift, mystical intelligence of a dream. A moment or two of absolute silence followed, and then Madame turned, looked round the room, and asked with an air of perplexity, "What is it?"

It was apparently Batavius; and as soon as he saw Lady Rose, he had an intention of silently withdrawing, for he was wearing a shabby and unbecoming suit; but Rose was too instantly sensible of his presence to permit this runaway vanity.

"Here is Captain De Vries," she cried. "Now we shall have some sensible conversation. Upon my honor, Captain, you are a little miracle of good fortune."

And Batavius could not resist such flattering words. He came forward with all his natural self-satisfaction, explaining—in spite of Rose's petulant denials—the impropriety

of his rough dress in her presence, and his desire to present himself in all the extraordinary splendor due to the proudest moment in his life. And greatly to Virginia's surprise, she made room for his chair at her side, and advised him to ask Madame for a cup of her excellent coffee. With many apologies Batavius refused the coffee, and Rose nodded her handsome head with an air of satisfaction. "I was sure you would refuse," she said; "a drink that is neither moral nor respectable could never tempt Captain De Vries."

Then Captain Van Vroom took up the explanation, while Batavius stroked his chin with his left hand, and assumed a thoughtful, critical attitude; and Madame and Virginia wondered what this sudden friendliness of the once scornful beauty might mean.

"There may be something in Lady Rose Harley's deductions," said Batavius with slow, considering speech.

"Something!" cried Rose indignantly, "there is everything, I assure you. Just remember what coffee drinkers New Yorkers are—and no doubt that fact accounts for their behavior."

"Well then," asked Madame, "did the Bostonians, drinking tea, behave better?"

"There is where my argument fails," said Rose unblushingly. "I am bound to say their recent conduct has been abominable. We were told that Boston—or towns near it—added to all the mummeries of New York the absurdity of a funeral for Liberty—made a coffin of their imaginary goddess—inscribed it with her name—and then, with tolling bells and flags bound with crape, the entire population carried it to the grave. It was a childish thing to do, and my father was amazed that men of wealth and position should have taken part in it."

"The men of wealth and position knew what they were doing," said Captain Van Vroom. "Such mummery they

needed not. No, indeed! Their patriotism was founded on justice, and fed by reason and common sense. With the mass of people this is not so. By their feelings they are led. Reason they do not listen to—like children are they. Facts could not make them feel the touch of slavery, but they understood the funeral and the presence of the rich and great at it. When a man is educated, facts and reasons will lead him—the uneducated must be moved through their feelings. What say you, Batavius?"

"Well, my Captain, I was—as you know—born and christened in Amsterdam. I am a sailor, a coffee broker, and a man of trade. And I am against all this quarreling with the government. It breaks up friendships. My old friends get out of my way, as if they owed me money. Business affairs all go backward. Men will not work, and are poor as a matter of course—pigeons ready cooked do not fly into the mouth. I say nothing against liberty. Liberty may be very good, but it is no good for us. There it is! For twenty years I have heard New York grumbling at the government, so then I know what to think of affairs in A. D. 1765"—and Batavius shrugged his shoulders in hopeless disapproval of the insubordinate New Yorkers.

"You are speaking for a purpose, Batavius, and I like it not," said the Captain.

"But, sir, such sentiments are wise and prudent," answered Rose, "and I am sure Captain De Vries can be trusted with any kind of sentiments." Then turning to Virginia she said, "Dear Virginia, you have a sensible lover, and I hope you approve his opinions," but to these words she added a look which not only asked, but commanded opposition. And Virginia understood the situation, and answered with spirit, "I hate them!"

"*Oh, fie!* Is that how matters stand? What will it mean when you are married, I wonder?"

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"I will tell you in plain Dutch what it will mean," replied Batavius. "It will mean that my Virginia will change her opinions when she changes her name."

"Virginia will never change a letter of her opinions. She likes not your opinions. They are not the truth!" and Virginia emphasized her statements by a decided little blow with her hand on the table; the cups and glasses echoed it, and Rose exclaimed—

"Bravo, Virginia! I like to strike fire from a soul, the spark fell on fine tinder this time! And how pretty you look when you blaze!"

"Come, come," said Madame, "you grow too close to quarreling;" and she bespoke by a glance the Captain's interference.

"Batavius," he said, "I have listened to you. I like not your words."

"Captain, I am a sailor and a coffee broker, also I am a Dutchman born in Amsterdam; and my experience—for I am a man of experience—has taught me that trade and commerce are opposed to what men call liberty and patriotism."

"That is not the truth, Batavius. It is even a gigantic untruth! Commerce and trade feed liberty, and nurse patriotism, and when they are wronged, find the ways and means to defend them. As to your being born in Amsterdam, that is neither your merit nor your fault—every man can not be born in New York—but what then? Commerce and trade make one city of the universe. Yes, that is the truth!"

"*La*, gentlemen, do not quarrel! I see that both of you have drunk too much coffee. Virginia also is flaming. I only am good, and reasonable, and inclined to keep the peace."

"I will see that you all have tea in the afternoon," said Madame.

"But, Madame, to-day is not Sunday, and tea is such a religious drink."

"Well, then, we are a religious family, Rose. At least I hope so. And I like tea. I must confess that; so I am glad it is a religious drink. One quarrelsome cup is sufficient."

"I do not believe it is religious," said Virginia. "It seems always to make people say unkind, critical things."

"Virginia, religious people have to reprove, and say unkind things. Worldly people do not correct faults—they seem to enjoy them. When I am at my Aunt Portman's I notice that if the bishop or any of the superior clergy call, they are served with tea; except, of course, at dinner, when they all drink port wine. When rich ladies want to be charitable they give to poor villagers a pound of tea. If they meet to sew for the heathen, they have tea to their sewing. Why? There is a sect called Wesleyan Methodists who have a special service called a Chapel Tea Meeting. It is a delightful service."

"Now, then, my little lady, thou art talking nonsense," said the Captain, and Madame laughed outright, and Bata-vius smiled as one prepared to believe any absurdity, not including himself.

"Take my word for it!" continued Rose. "I used to go to Chapel Tea Meetings with my nurse, when I was eight years old. I would like to go now. They had delicious tea handed round, and the finest wheat bread,—*with caraway seeds in it!* Sometimes they had hot spiced buns, buttered. They were so good, no wonder people felt religious after eating them. I did myself. Then when tea was over they sang hymns, beautiful hymns full of 'glory hallelujahs!' Oh, you may smile, Captain, but it was the grandest singing I ever heard. It made me feel like flying away to heaven."

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"A little girl you were—just eight years old."

"With all my soul, I wish I could feel that way now, Captain. Alas! alas! I have lost my wings."

"And was that all the service, Rose?" asked Virginia. "Had you no sermon?"

"No, it was not all. Some of the men, and some of the women, present stood up and confessed they were very bad, and very sorry for being bad; and when I remembered the wicked things they did, and I did *not* do, I felt pleased with myself for long afterwards. Once my nurse stood up and said she had been proud, and unjust, and bad tempered—that was a great satisfaction to me. I did not allow her to forget that circumstance."

"My word!" ejaculated the Captain. "I never heard of such carryings on."

"Well, now, very interesting they would be. I would like to see Elder Semple stand up in a public meeting, and say he was bad; or Colonel Rutgers—or—Batavius De Vries," answered Madame with a laugh.

Batavius made some emphatic refusals, and while laughter yet filled the room, Rose continued:

"Suppose, dear Madame, we have a tea meeting to-night; and Captain Van Vroom, and Captain De Vries, and my father, and Captain Robert Lawson be asked to confess their——"

"Drop Jansen Van Vroom out of that plan, my little lady," shouted the Captain, as he rose from the table, and noisily pushed his chair aside.

"Katrina, I will drink only chocolate this night, and I will go into the city now, before Lady Rose has time to give the good drink a bad character."

Madame went out of the room with her husband, and when she returned, she found Batavius still lingering. "Art thou not going?" she asked crossly. "A great deal Vir-

ginia and Rose have to talk over and arrange. Weddings are not made without talk and trouble."

"As it is my wedding, moeder, that is to be talked over, it is proper I should remain."

"How mistaken you are!" cried Lady Rose. "You have nothing to do with your wedding, except to make Virginia the necessary promises. From this day, Virginia comes into authority; complete obedience is all that will be required of you."

"There is a good fire in the best parlor, and the room is warm, and the key in the door," said Madame, "and if you girls will go there with your secrets, I can get the breakfast things cleared away."

"Oh, you good moeder!" exclaimed Virginia; "so kind, so thoughtful are you!"

Then Batavius made elaborate adieux, and with a daring born of that impudent bravado, which always chooses some unlucky moment, he came towards Virginia. The intention to embrace her was so evident that the girl turned pale and shrank aside, and Rose stepped quickly between them—

"Oh, Captain!" she exclaimed, "let me make you sensible of the importance of your presence to-night. My father and Captain Robert Lawson are coming to pay their respects to Captain Van Vroom and yourself. I own that I have made this interview seem important to them, for Lawson is about to sail for India with troops for General Clive. So it is to seas quite unknown he is going, and I ventured to tell him you knew all about the winds and tides and best harbors of that strange land. Upon my honor, I think I gave you credit for knowing something of the language of the people. Indeed, Lawson is most anxious to meet you, and I must confess that I assured him, not only of your knowledge, but of your good-nature—and so pledged my own honor for your willingness to instruct Captain Lawson."

"Your ladyship confers on me a great pleasure. All my knowledge and experience—and I am a man of experience—I put at Captain Lawson's service. But as to the language, very little of it is known to me. What I needed I learned, no more, for I cared nothing for those dirty pagans. Often I was told I had better learn to talk with them, but I always said to myself 'No! If they wish to talk with Batavius De Vries, they can learn English?' Now I am sorry."

"Then you will be here to-night?"

"Of that there is no doubt. At your service, my lady."

She permitted him to reach the door, then recalled him. With eagerness he answered the summons, and she said shyly and softly—

"Captain De Vries—I wish—oh, dear! I am afraid to ask you"—and she stood before him, with her eyes veiled and cast down, and a pretense of vacillation and indecision that was exceedingly attractive. Batavius was delighted. Here was a lady of noble birth afraid of him. He drew himself up to his full stature, and said with an assuring kindness of tone and manner—

"Whatever you wish, Batavius De Vries will be proud to grant."

Then she suddenly threw up her head, and the splendor of her eyes into his. A flash of lightning could hardly have affected him more. He trembled, he wished to fall at her feet, to kiss the hem of her garment. It was a moment of heavenly enchantment; he was dumb under its bewitching spell.

"I wish—oh, Captain—I wish so much that you would wear the suit you wore when I last saw you."

"Oh, my lady!"

"And the red neckerchief—and the red sash. Captain Lawson admires a well-dressed sailor, and in that dress you

looked like one of the sailors of the brave old times—knights of the sea, you know.”

“Oh, my lady!”

“Thank you. Good-by. Come, Virginia.”

Silently, hand in hand, they went to the parlor. Virginia now hoped to end the long suspense and uncertainty of her position. The last hour it had been almost unbearable, and she could hardly acquit Rose of unkindness in prolonging it, by her chattering at the breakfast table; and then by her quite unnecessary flirtation with Batavius. Even when they were alone with the world locked out, Rose seemed loath to begin the conversation. She enthused over the blazing hickory logs—over the dancing sunbeams—over the comfortable chair into which she had cuddled her little form, and then noticing Virginia’s look of anxious inquiry turn to one of grief and injury, she stopped suddenly, and stooping forward until she could take her friend’s hand, asked, “What is vexing you, darling? Let me tell you soberly, you ought to be very contented.”

“Rose, how can you ask? What you can tell me is life or death to me, and you frivol and flirt, and say not a word to quiet my anxieties. Oh, Rose, whatever you have to tell me, speak it plainly. I am past hoping and surmising.”

“My sweet Virginia, I have nothing to tell you, except what I told you in my first letter. When you are a bride, there will be no bridegroom. Batavius will be miles and miles away. Is not that enough?”

“But I want to know——”

“I dare be bound you do—so do I. But my father insisted that you should know nothing about it. Need I remind you of the temper New Yorkers are in about the kidnapping of their citizens for English men-of-war? Father says, in Gloucester, a man found guilty of aiding in the

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abduction of a fisherman got forty lashes, and was also fined so heavily that it will take him four years of hard labor in prison to pay the fine."

"We ought to have considered these things."

"To be sure, but we are still among the multitude who do the things they ought not to do, and leave undone the things they ought to do. I thought of nothing but the joy of ridding you of the nasty creature, but my father saw at once that the faintest suspicion of your connection with the matter would be worse than death to you, and to your dear father and mother. I was going to England, where the affair will be considered a good joke, or a clever bit of loyalty. It will really be a feather in my cap, and I shall be a heroine on a small scale—but you! Here in New York! Oh, Virginia, the terrors of death would be nothing to your sufferings—the scorn and disdain of the women who would cease to know you, except as a mark for outrageous insult—the bitter contempt of the men, who are growing hotter colonials hour by hour, and who grudge every man to England, now that they believe every man will be needed to fight colonial battles. Really the position was not thinkable. Your fine would be in accordance with your father's estate, and the dear old Captain would be left in his old age penniless, and shorn of his honorable name—your dear mother——"

"Rose, Rose, stop! How did we dare to imagine such a thing?"

"Ignorance, thoughtlessness, selfishness, love of doing something unusual, of getting our own way at any price."

"Oh Rose, Rose!"

"The idea sprang from nothing but evil, and if father had not interfered, where it would have ended, God knows! In the common jail certainly; for these colonials are a suspicious lot, and somehow their suspicions go straight to the truth."

"Am I to know nothing, then, of what has been done?"

"I will tell you that father was delighted to catch Batavius for the service, and that he can not escape father. As for you, go on with the preparations for your marriage, precisely as if you desired and expected to be Mrs. Batavius De Vries on the eighteenth of this month."

"How can I?"

"Oh, be as forlorn and melancholy as you choose! I think you are a little ungrateful! I have had much anxiety, and father has taken the journey to New York when we might as well have sailed from Boston—and now—when I am dying to be at Aunt Portman's, I must delay ten days and pretend to admire that nasty little toad, in order to lure the bird decently into the net. Upon my word, Miss Virginia, if I thought Joris would be as little grateful as you are, I would swear off kind deeds for ever. They are a dangerous luxury. May I never be tempted again into their unthankful business!"

"Have a little patience with me, Rose. You do not know how much I have suffered."

"I myself have not been reclining on a bed of roses."

"I have lost Joris through this business."

"Fiddlesticks. If so, he is easily lost; and as men go—better lost."

"He threw my Strawberry Handkerchief at my feet—he tore it in two also."

"Some day he will fall on his knees to pick it up."

"Do you know anything, have you heard anything of Joris?"

"He is remarkably well and happy."

"I thought of him as poor and lonely, and on the way to all the terrors of a life of warfare in India."

"He has more than heart can wish—his eyes stand out with fatness. I remember that description, Virginia, be-

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cause when the arch-deacon used to intone it, I always expected him to use the pronoun 'I,' 'I have more than, etc.' In truth, Joris has the wine and the honeycomb and the incense of London society. He is the hero of all fashion, and his dashing vivacity carries everything before it. The young women adore him, the middle-aged sing his praises, the men copy all he does, and quote all he says. Ever since the day of Buckingham, and before that, London has gone mad over a handsome young fellow; and alas, the old town does not grow wiser!"

"Who told you these things, Rose?"

"My aunt, who also is one of his adorers. Are you not pleased?"

"No."

"What for? You ought to be."

"He is in temptation. He may do wrong."

"Do not be good beyond measure. Every young knight of the olden time went through his temptations."

"If you have ever been in love, Rose——"

"My dear Virginia, no woman was ever so much in love as I am. I have condensed the whole world into one man, with the non-interfering addendum of a sympathetic father. I live for this one man. I love him, as you never knew how to love, beyond all considerations and conditions, beyond the scorn of man, or the favor of man, without care for poverty or sickness, or even old age. I have considered every likelihood, and I see that my love glorifies every situation. Lord! I love him as the good God loves us, because he loves me, and needs me, and because I hear his soul crying after my soul, whether I sleep or wake."

"Rose, are you dreaming?"

"Wide awake, my precious."

"And his name?"

"His adorable, delightful name is Arent."

"Oh Rose, Rose! And what will your father say?"

"I am blessed with sensible relations,—that is,—they can take in two sides of a question—their own, and somebody else's side. I have told father, and he behaved in a most delightful way."

"What did he do?"

"Kissed me."

"What did he say?"

"He asked me all about Arent. And I sat down on his knees, and stroked his face, and told him; and by-and-by he got to laughing at me,—but he was glad Arent was a sailor—and when Arent boarded us at the Sea Gate, and brought our ship up the river himself, father stood at the wheel beside him, and fell dead in love with him. 'Your Arent is a splendid sea god,' he said, and I gave father a long, sweet kiss, and began to walk on my tiptoes, and father laughed, and told me to come to flat-feet awhile. So I sat down again on his knee, and asked him straight if I might marry Arent Van Vroom? And he looked at me until the tears were in both our eyes, and said he did not think I could find a sweeter, brighter, honester young fellow. And I said I would be of age in three months, could I marry him then? And he said 'Yes,' but he would like to be present. Then I asked him if I could have my mother's fortune without any bother or hindrance, and he said, certainly, he would instruct Moser to that effect. Then I asked him if we could have 'Seabright' for our home, because Seabright is a beautiful castle on a high bluff near the sea, and I could watch Arent come and go from its windows. And he laughed and asked if there was any other trifle I cared for? Then we both laughed, and he said, 'Your darling mother left all, and married me for love, Rose, and I promised her that the little babe on her breast should do the same. To my beloved Alicia I keep my promise this day,

and I am thankful to you, Rose, for making it so easy to keep.' Was not his behavior beautiful and fatherly?"

"If my father had only been as reasonable!"

"Circumstances alter cases."

"His dislike of Joris was absurd."

"Say rather, his liking for Batavius."

"But, Rose, what will your aunt say? There was a duke in question, was there not?"

"He is now out of the question. And aunt has an accommodating temper. She says second-bests are often the luckiest. Whatever is, she is delighted with it; and when Arent, in all his fresh, splendid beauty and wonderful charm, walks into her presence, she will cast contempt on the duke. It will be nice to hear her make him smaller every minute."

"And she will accept Arent?"

"Virginia, she will go crazy over Arent. She will move heaven and earth to help him. But she need not saddle herself with that task. She has an old cousin on the Admiralty Board, and if he wants a peaceful nightcap, he will have to give Arent his ship. And then Arent will put on the blue and gold, and wear epaulettes, and write R. N. after his name; and in the chancel of St. Margaret's I shall meet him clothed in spotless white, and with songs of love and joy give myself to the dearest, noblest soul that does God's will between the two great firmaments."

And at these words the wonderful young lord of the sea entered the room, throwing wide the door with the air of a man who wanted endless spaces, and suffered no impediments. His eyes fell instantly on Rose, and all that was divine and immortal in Arent Van Vroom sprang into his face. The next moment Rose's arms were around his neck, and her lovely face between his hands, and he kissed her, and kissed her, till the room was full of joy and of low laughter and of little sounds of happiness, for which there are no ex-

plaining words on this plane of humanity. So that Virginia wondered to see them in an atmosphere of their own, lighter and lovelier than the rest of the room; and she walked softly and closed the door, as if the place had suddenly become sacred and secret, not understanding yet that love, when it is perfect, has cast out fear and has nothing to hide or to be ashamed of.

"A kiss, sweet! A kiss, sweet! And think of me only with love and joy. In four short weeks we shall meet again!" So she kissed him, laughing happily, and whispering tender words the while.

"The tide serves," he said, "and all are on board—in half-an-hour we shall be afloat. Oh, Rose of the World! Oh, my Rose! How I love you!"

"Arent!"

"My sweet sister! Did you think I had forgotten you? No!"

"Oh, Arent, have you no word of pity for me? You know I hate Batavius—to marry him will kill me."

"Then for God's sake, marry him not. I can give you six minutes, Virginia—run for your cloak and hood. Come with me. No one shall prevent it."

"My fader! My moeder!"

"Why do you trouble Arent?" cried Rose. "Are you going with him If so, go! If not, why make sorrow for others?"

"Do not marry a man you hate, Virginia. Come with me. There are four other women on board. Come! Do not fear. I will care for you."

"Oh, what shall I do, Rose?"

"What your heart tells you to do. But in God's mercy, do one thing or the other. Go, if you want to go. I can manage all that is left behind."

"I am so miserable!"

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"Make yourself happy. Don't fiddle-faddle any longer. I'll swear you breed a fever in me! Can't you take your own way? Lord! I would know what I wanted, if I was you! Your hood and cloak are in hall—three minutes, Virginia. You can change your life in three minutes, and perhaps be happy."

"You are scornful. You are cross, Rose. No, I have not the courage to fly from Fate. She would pursue me."

"Then in Heaven's name, say a cheerful good-by to Arent. Why cross his way with tears?"

So Arent kissed the weeping girl, and then taking Rose's hand they went together to the front door. There, in smiles and sunshine, they parted, full of a hope that Love made sure. Three thousand miles of trackless wastes of water, and unplumbed depths of death, could not separate them; they knew that all-conquering Love would steer their barks to the haven where they would meet again.

A little wearied and distrait, Rose returned to her friend. She wished to rouse some enthusiasm in her, but could touch no subject to which Virginia was responsive. Even the good news about Joris had not been satisfactory. Virginia would rather have heard that he was in the dangers and restrictions of camp life. Among the beauties of London, why should he remember a homespun colonial girl like her? Also, he believed himself to have just cause for forgetting—yes, everything appeared to be against Virginia at this time, and the long suspense and uncertainty about her marriage had completely broken her usually bright, hopeful spirits.

Really the cause of her unhappiness was something deeper and more vital than suspense or uncertainty. The girl had a conscience sensitive as a nerve, and the kidnaping of Batavius for the King's service—which seemed to Rose a delectable bit of mischief—had almost from the first hour of its inception caused Virginia fear and suffering, and some re-

morse. Then Captain Harley's view of the matter had convinced her that she must carry a life-long secret. It seemed an unbearable burden. Would not even Joris refuse a love preserved for him under such conditions? Would she dare to confess the truth to Joris? No; she felt that she would rather never see her lover's face again. And what if Batavius should accuse her? He was a strangely suspicious, far-seeing man where Batavius De Vries was concerned. He might not, indeed, be able to prove her complicity in his abduction, but she knew well that the accusation of the crime would be almost as bad as its proof. Suspicion would dog her steps; she would be a woman walking alone in a dark shadow. In a city full of souls, she would have neither friend nor lover. And she felt bitterly that she would deserve neither.

So Rose's enjoyment of the situation almost angered her, and she was glad enough when Rose reminded her that she "might keep all her fingers out of the abduction pie. When it is opened, the solitary blackbird in it will pipe merrily for the dear King," she said, "and if Joris should go to India, they may even pipe 'God save the King' together."

"Joris go to India! Oh, Rose, you have promised me to see him as soon as you reach London."

"Of course I shall."

"What will you say to him?"

"I will confess everything to him. I will leave you as white as a lily leaf. I will take all the blame. I will send him to you as penitent and as broken-hearted as a lover can be."

"He will have forgotten me by that time."

"You almost deserve that he should. Nothing but doubts and fears and suspicions! Have you not a hope smuggling somewhere about your heart?"

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"It will be weeks yet before he sees you. How many fresh beauties does he meet every day?"

"A score or two. They come from all parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland specially to captivate him."

"He will forget me. How can he help it? Rose, what will you say to him?"

"I will tell him you are the loveliest wonder in America, that you are as true as life and death to him, that you have shut yourself away from all lovers for his sake, that you live only to remember him, that you will marry no one but him, and I will mix all with a few ladylike oaths, my dear, to make the words strike stronger. Faith, Virginia, you know what kind of pap lovers are fed on! My dear, I will keep the porringer always hot and ready."

"You promise all this?"

"On my honor, I promise it! My first business in London will be to see Joris Artavelde. Now, let us talk of what is to be done here. Are you satisfied?"

"Yes-s-s."

"Say the word straight. What else do you want? You have my promise so often, I am ashamed to repeat it. Let me tell you, Virginia, you make friendship harder than it should be."

"Rose, I can hardly yet believe, but indeed I am grateful to you. You know that."

"Then, if you would be so obliging as to show it a little."

"How must I show it, Rose?"

"Love me, and kiss me, and believe in me, and talk a little over the disappointment *some one* is going to get, and let us have a comfortable laugh over it. For I do assure you, that in a few days a certain man will be forever out of your life; and then will come back Joris, and love, and everything you desire."

"Why did you flatter Batavius this morning?"

"For good reasons—and to-night I shall have to pay more attention to the hideous little animal than he will ever get again. By all that is good and great, it will be for your sake; and if he gloats himself over it, try and look a little jealous."

"Jealous! *Of him!* Oh, Joris! Joris!"

"For Heaven's sake, Virginia, keep your tears for a fitter occasion. If the love of Joris is true love, it is sure to come back to you. True love is one of the great realities, like morning or springtime. Faith, my darling, we know when it is midnight that morning is sure to come; and though your garden is now buried in snow, you would swear on the Book that the violets and the daffodils will find their way through it. You know they are there! True love is a reality like that, dear."

"But, Rose, Joris believes I have been false to him."

"And you are such a little fool as to imagine that any one is cured of love by the falseness of love? Lord! Three long rainy days in the country are before all the perfidies in curing a man of love. And as the love of Joris survived that serious, placid, drowsy visit to the Coldens, trust me, you have every reason to believe that your supposed perfidies keep his love in that state of worry and fret and fluster your selfish little heart desires. Now, Batavius——"

"I hate Batavius! My heart would be glad if he was at the bottom of the sea, and the fishes eating him."

"My opinion exactly. I would even like to see the performance. But let me tell you soberly, it is dangerous to say such words now. When the gentleman disappears, they might be remembered. To-night he will be dressed in all his glory. I shall wear my pink frock, and let down my hair, languish a little for his benefit, and put on all my airs and lassitudes."

"Oh, Rose! Rose!"

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"*La*, my dear! we shall have a delightful evening between the Captains three. My father is a quiet man, Lawson comes to observe, Batavius will fill the whole canvas."

"Perhaps he may astonish you. I have heard him talk about India. It was like being in another world."

"I have no doubt of it. I have seen the abominable likeness of Hyder Ali, the brutal King of the Mysore. It is very like Batavius. I suppose that he will be here early."

Rose's supposition was correct. Batavius was present at the tea table, looking as nearly like a Barbary pirate as a moral and respectable merchant captain could look. But in a way his splendid, reckless clothing suited the man. One expected adventures from a creature so romantically attired. And this note of romance was emphasized by a short sword, or yatghan, whose broad sheath was studded with jewels, mostly uncut, and in barbaric settings of pure gold.

"A trifle which I picked up after the storming of Gwalior," he explained to Lord Harley and Captain Lawson. And this remark led naturally to the great point of interest—the rich kingdoms of Hindoostan which England was then subjugating. Quickly Batavius unrolled the maps and charts he had brought with him, and as he talked, and explained, the two English captains listened with almost breathless wonder to his tale. For on this subject Batavius was an inspired man. His very speech seemed to be only of jeweled words, for as soon as he opened his mouth about Poonah and Benares, gold, silver, diamonds, rubies, pearls, sapphires, rolled naturally along the thread of common words. He described a land of enchantments, and the sailor captains listened like spellbound children. He led them through the dangerous straits and waterways, and it was as if he was standing at his mainmast teaching the navies of the world the mystic roads into these old treasure lands. "Temples!" he snapped his fingers at the word. "They were mere hiding

places for the incredible wealth of the rajahs. It was right to loot them. It was even a duty. As for their dirty, hideous gods, the ax and the fire for them. It was a sin, and more than a sin, to see them hung round with priceless opals and other Christian gems."

And for once the egotism of Batavius was becoming, was even magnificent. It seemed quite proper to a man who had looted temples and kicked their idols—after denuding them of Christian gems—into the common highway. Virginia looked at him with half-shut eyes, and wondered, liking him none the better for his deeds of prowess. Rose cried out with enthusiasm, "Pray, why are you here, Captain De Vries? You ought to be ruling an Indian principality!"

"We shall see him lord of Mysore yet!" said Captain Lawson, and Lord Harley added, "You are a very wizard, De Vries. You must have been born in India, sir."

"I was born in Amsterdam, gentlemen; and christened in the Oude Kirke there. I thank God I am a Dutchman and a Calvinist—and a pagan is a creature I abhor. But my Captain there"—and he bowed to Captain Van Vroom—"taught me all these things. When I was a little lad, twelve years old, he began to teach me the ways, and the winds, and the seas, and the river mouths of these burning lands; and now, if I can tell what he told me, so as to serve our most gracious King, I am twice over grateful to my old master and my old Captain." And again he rose and bowed to Captain Jansen Van Vroom, who sat smiling and nodding on his bright hearthstone.

And for this confession, and this courtesy, Katrina gave Batavius her hand, and forgave him much she had laid up in her heart against him.

When the little party broke up, Rose stood by Captain Lawson's side for a few minutes, and asked, "Is he not the very man you want?"

"He is the God-made man for our need. Look at his eyes—and his big hands. They could carry a ship anywhere he wanted her to go. And he has been learning these seas twenty years in order to be ready for us! By Saint George! the angels who carry the flag of England look well ahead! His Majesty ought to pension you royally for life."

"You are satisfied with him?"

"On my word, the greatest possible find—not a bad fellow either "

"As you take him—nasty to ladies—makes them sick—makes them shiver, and creep, and grow cold and damp. But men can stand such feeling if they sort with their duty—women can't stand them, no, not if the man meant their salvation. On my honor, Captain, 'tis so!"

The management of Batavius was now an easy problem, and Rose said with a sigh of relief, "I can leave him to Lawson. The creature follows a cocked hat as naturally as a Scot follows the bagpipes. He went out of his senses with delight when Lawson asked him to breakfast." And this overture of friendship was quickly followed by an intimacy which occupied the days of both men, to their apparent satisfaction. About eight o'clock in the morning Batavius would go to the King's Arms Tavern in Maiden Lane, and a few minutes afterwards Captain Lawson would follow him. Then Batavius turned instructor on the subject of American delicacies suitable for breakfast—fried oysters, and dainty fish, and quail's breasts, and bear and venison steak, buckwheat cakes, and all those other varieties of hot bread and fried bread which at that day had not entered into an Englishman's dreams of breakfast necessities.

After this meal the two men would smoke and visit the fort, parade themselves on the fashionable streets, bow to the royalist matrons, and flirt with the royalist beauties. Or they hired a carriage and drove out to some fine royalist

dwelling in the suburbs, and had a day's shooting or skating. And every hour Batavius grew more elated by his social success. It was the very life of which he had dreamed, and for which he had mainly desired to accumulate wealth. And his vanity was also continually fed by Captain Lawson's complaints that "no man had a chance if De Vries was present. You draw the ladies round you as if you had a charm," he sighed, "and the handsomest among us must take off our hats to you where beauties are concerned."

Without a doubt Batavius accepted these compliments, and when he called at the Van Vrooms' house in the evenings he related all the favors and attentions he had received during the day to Virginia and Rose. Rose endorsed them to the very edge of mockery. Virginia had begun to look at him with a silent, negative scorn that always reduced his utmost self-complacency to distressing embarrassment.

How did she do it? Very suddenly this new feature of her hatred for him had appeared. At first he denied its power, and went oftener to assure himself that it was only an accident. But no, if he but met her steady, unwinking gaze, though his blood boiled with anger, he became the creature of her will. "You had better go, Batavius," she said authoritatively—and Batavius went. Again she had commanded him "to speak the truth, or stop talking," and he had found himself unable to finish the story of the lovely Miss Brower's attentions to him.

Another feature of this condition was that he became painfully conscious of his hands. They seemed immense to him. They sprawled all over his knees. He was sure those piercing orbs saw on them all the blood which they had shed; and in them, all the treasure which had glutted their fierce clasp. Yet as long as Virginia looked at him he could not move them. He wished to put them in his pockets—behind his back—anywhere—but until she chose to turn away her

eyes they petrified him; and his terrible hands grew more and more obtrusive, and more and more beyond his control.

This strange influence tortured him. He feared to encounter it, and yet, being a natural fighter, he wished continually to meet and overcome it. Rose seemed unconscious of its presence. Only over himself the malign authority had power.

He could not even determine whether Virginia was personally aware of her malignant puissance, and yet he recognized fully that she wielded some force he was unable to resist.

He stayed away one night, and Madame worried over his absence. "I told him not to come," said Rose; "he is only in the road of every one. And he is drawing a particular chart for Captain Lawson's ship, and of course the dear King must be attended to first of all."

"My opinion is not that," answered Katrina crossly. "For a bride all men step aside. And there are many things Batavius could do, if he were here. This very morning, Virginia, your father has gone about business Batavius ought to attend to."

"Oh, Madame! This *morning*! A lover that comes in the morning is detestable," answered Rose. "In the morning we want to keep our curl papers up, and our back hair down, and our stays off, and our feet slipshod and comfortable—and so talk over the men; and how entirely stupid it is for one of them to interfere. I have given Batavius hint after hint about his indelicacies in this respect, and the creature just chuckles and comes the earlier next day. What a little beast he is!"

"Such words should not be spoken, Rose," replied Madame. "When he was talking the other night, he looked like a very great, clever man."

"Like a very great, clever devil you mean, Madame.

Devils are generally clever in their own wicked parts, and the eyes of Batavius were like furnaces—and his hands! Good God! His hands were two demons—they could have broken the neck of any creature, man or beast. Did you see how they twisted and clenched, as if they had memories that were frantic to repeat themselves?”

“Such nonsense you talk, my dear! How can fingers have memories?”

“*La, Madame!* If you would only consider a moment: every part of our wonderful bodies has memories—our lips remember the kisses of the beloved one; our ears are full of old, old songs; our eyes remember the faces they love; our noses the perfumes they enjoy. Fingers learn to steal, and don’t forget the trick; they learn to embroider, to play the violin or harpsichord, and the needle and the notes are not to learn twice over—even our feet have memories. Can they ever forget the steps of the minuet? Upon my honor, Madame, we are alive with memories from head to feet. And I vow the fingers of Batavius were aching that night for the scaling ladders and the throats of his enemies and the loot of pagan temples.”

“Batavius is a brave man, no doubt of that, and also——”

“Moral and respectable. He says so himself, so it must be so.”

“Lady Rose, you should not speak against sailors.”

“If sailors were all like Arent I would stand all life long to praise them. When did your boy rob temples, or kick the gods of the people into the highways? When did he bring home the jewels from altars and sacred vestments, and the gold from some murdered rajah’s treasure house? The sailors of your house, Madame, are good men. I say Batavius De Vries is a very bad man—if man he be. For some men are devils before they go to hell. They don’t need to die in order to be possessed.”

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Then Madame went angrily away, and Rose said, "I am sorry I spoke so freely, Virginia. Some little mischief was at my elbow and egged me on to it. But, frankly, I can not see how your mother can endure the thought of your marriage to Batavius."

"I shall never marry Batavius."

"But as yet she does not know that."

"Rose, I have the man completely in my power. I triumph over him! I am a new woman. For four days I have been a free woman. And now that I am sure of my freedom, I want to tell you what I can tell you. Did you not notice that yesterday, twice over, I gave him an order, and he obeyed it?"

"You told him to stop lying, and he said not another word; but the fire of hell was in his eyes, and why he did not let loose his tongue is a miracle."

"I did not permit him."

"But what are you saying?"

"I told him to go, and he went."

"Faith, and that was another miracle. And if you go on working such miracles, on such material, I shall believe you have sold yourself to some bigger devil than Batavius—and that he has to obey him. Sure, if there be angels and archangels, it is very likely there are devils and archdevils; though if any of the latter be worse than your lover, I shall lose all faith in John Milton. For, if he writes truly, the great Satan himself is a gentleman compared with Captain De Vries."

As Rose was speaking, Virginia took her friend's hands in her own. "Listen," she said, as soon as Rose was silent. "Listen, and I will tell you all I can. It was last Monday night, you had gone to the Semples', and I was left alone in the living-room. Father was in the city; mother was giving out wool to the slaves in the out-kitchen. Suddenly

Batavius entered, and a terror beyond movement or speech came over me. But in the heart of the terror there was a great struggle, and a voice within me said, 'Command the man to stop at the foot of the table!' And then I was strong and calm, for I felt a power wonderful, irresistible, flowing through me like a flood—and at the moment, I thought it was death, so fierce, so sharp, so sweet, so mighty was the feeling that brought me help. And I said to Batavius—whether audibly or not, I cannot tell—'*Stop where you are! Do not come one inch nearer me!*' And he stood still, and his arms fell to his sides, and he looked at me like a chained dog. Again the power came surging through me, and I said, '*Go, and come not back this night! I forbid it.*' And on him my eyes were fixed, and as I looked he went silently away.

"Virginia! What think you?"

"I think then my angel helped me. When I was at school I learned a piece by Mr. William Shakespeare, which said plainly that angels lackey the chaste and pure in heart, and will not suffer evil to come near them. And in that moment's agony of fear and horror, when just three words of prayer leaped from my fainting soul, my angel came and unlocked some chamber of life never before known to me, and from it rushed forth a power mighty to help."

"Well, then?"

"As soon as Batavius was gone, to my room I ran, and fell upon my face in silent adoration and thanksgiving. For I was dumb, and had no words for an experience so strange and wonderful—but God understood. And when I rose I knew that I was free and forgiven, and should never marry Batavius. Also I knew that the gift was one for emergencies, so then I fear to make talk of it, or use it unlawfully."

"You say you were forgiven. What for?"

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"I was all wrong about Batavius being carried off. The plot was a wicked one."

"I think that also now, Virginia, but at the time it appeared a capital idea in many ways. And if it was a wrong for Batavius, for you it seemed all right, and sure. I have often heard that it is not unlawful to do evil if good come of it."

"I was as bad as you. But now I see that to do wrong that right may come is a very great sin—it is trusting to the devil instead of trusting God. Never will I do that wickedness again."

"Nor will I," and Rose, with tears and sweet endearments, crept closer to her friend and whispered, "Let me kiss your hands, Virginia; the angel may have touched them; let me kneel at your knees and ask you to forgive me, for I led you wrong, and I would not have your angel angry at me. Alas! I fear I have no angel to care for me, or to trouble herself as to whether I want help or not!"

"If you were in such a strait that your soul called out as mine called, your angel would hear you—even if she were at the edge of the universe."

"And come to me?"

"Yes, come to you."

At this moment Madame entered the room. "I wonder me at you two girls," she said. "Do you not hear the drums and fifes and the firing of cannon? Bogart, who has just come with a load of wood, tells me the new Governor is about to land, and the city is turning out to meet him. The Liberty Boys are filling the Park, and the English cavalry dashing about the streets, and there are flags on every building, and ladies in full dress at every window. And why then do you not go to 14 Wall Street and see the procession? Your father, Virginia, is in the delegation to welcome Sir Henry Moore."

"Indeed, Madame," answered Rose, "I am not going to welcome Sir Henry Moore until I see how he behaves himself. I am not a worshiper of Governor Colden, but the old man did his duty at the peril of his life."

"*He gave up the stamps!*" said Madame scornfully. "Captain Van Vroom in his place would have died first."

"There was nothing else to be done but give them up."

"Oh, you think that? Not so do I think. Any soldier in the army, any sailor on a man-of-war, would have shown him how to die, where death was duty. If my Jansen had been in charge of government property, and gave it up to save his life, he could never have looked in my face again. Never! For all his life years he would have divorced himself from Katrina. Virginia, will you not go?"

"To see the old Governor give place to Sir Henry Moore? No, moeder, I would rather not. Governor Colden was kind to me, always kind to me. I know nothing about Sir Henry Moore."

"My dear," said Rose, with a contemptuous sniff, "the poor fellow is not even an Englishman. He is a colonial, born in Jamaica, and of course he will side with the colonials. Poor England! She has a lot o' bad bairns, as Elder Semple says."

"Arent, my son Arent, is a colonial," said Madame, and she looked at Rose with eyes full of pride and reproof.

"Ah, Madame," answered Rose, "it is a small matter where your son Arent was born. Arent is a man made after the image and likeness of God, and I think, indeed, Madame, he must have been born in Heaven." And she dropped an enchanting little curtsey, and lifted Madame's hand and kissed it.

To resist such an appeal was impossible to the sweet-hearted Katrina. "My dear one," she answered proudly, and she drew the girl within her embrace, and touching her

cheek, said, "I kiss thee for Arent. Very proud will he be when I tell thy words to him." And so, smiling and hurrying—because dinner was ready—she went away, leaving an atmosphere of kindness that lingered like a perfume.

Captain Jansen did not return to dinner, but the talk was altogether of the Stamps, and of what Sir Henry Moore would do with the situation left him by Governor Colden. "The battle will be to fight over again," said Madame. "That is what the Captain thinks."

"Indeed, then," answered Rose, "the fight has never stopped a moment. The Liberty Boys are guarding the Stamps in the City Hall as if they were some new kind of death. The fort bristles with cannon. The English soldiers patrol the streets, and look the insults General Gage will not allow them to speak; and the citizens throw their looks back in words whose temper cannot be mistaken. If this is not a city up to the chin in a standing quarrel I don't know what it is. And likely more Stamps have come with Sir Henry Moore. A nice prospect indeed! I wish that Virginia would get married, and let me off to sea. The Atlantic Ocean will be halcyon peace compared to New York City."

So they ate their potpie of guinea-fowl breasts and their dessert of toasted apples and custard to an obligato of war talk. It appeared to give them pleasure, for it permitted their individualities some liberties any other conversation would have denied. Virginia took her part in it with her old temper. Rose had double-edged words hard to contradict, and Madame assumed the authority of silencing all differences by referring them to the future decision of the Captain.

But the war talk ended when the last apple on the dish had been eaten, and then the girls went to Virginia's room for a few hours' privacy. They took the long, low stairs

with sauntering steps, so silently, so thoughtfully, that a bar of song which Rose began seemed quite out of place, and died away at the fifth note. They were already turning with fresh interest to Virginia's strange revelation. About the Stamp Act, and the new Governor, there was nothing miraculous; but about Virginia's mysterious visitor, everything was wonderful, beyond human knowledge or earthly explanation—allying itself rather with the angelical and the heavenly.

For at that day the clergy preached against science, as if it was a new kind of sin; and the wonders of psychology and the mysteries of the inner man and woman and all the marvels of psychic powers and influences were quite unknown—or, if guessed at by some outlooking soul, fearfully regarded as within the realm of black magic or demonology.

But one hundred and forty years has revealed much once hidden, and a great number of men and women would now easily give Virginia's experience a scientific or psychological definition—explaining in a few words how that one moment of agonizing soul travail gave birth to a power always possessed, but hitherto latent. Would that explanation be satisfactory? Or would the great multitude find the psychological as mysterious as the angelical?

There is also this point to consider: that there are very few among all the sons and daughters of men who have not at some time in their lives been "visited." And if this angelic visit lasted only for one moment, no kind of reasoning would ever reason its certainty away. Never could they confound or doubt or deny it. What then of the millions who have always believed in the ministry of angels, as taught in the holy Scriptures from the first chapter to the last? Will they resign a loving, comforting personality for a *force* of some kind? Or give up the quiet, the confidence, and the strength which their faith gives them for a new view of

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things? Can science or psychology explain the mystery? Do any of us want it explained? Are we not more content to take it as we take "the peace that passeth understanding," perhaps just because we do not want to understand it.

So, then, if the matter stand thus in A. D. 1907, was it any wonder that two girls, spiritually without a doubt, should sit hour after hour—even till the shadows of evening fell—talking over Virginia's wonderful experience, wishing, hoping, full of adoration and gratitude, all their small frets and differences buried in renewed love and confidence? Never had they been so beautiful as at that hour. With heavenly love in their hearts, they leaned against each other, and spoke softly of love being eternal, and so hallowed it even on earth. And without doubt they were better, and sweeter, nobler, and lovelier for their faith.

This is a little deviation from the story, and those whom it wearies can pass it by. But very few indeed will pass it by. Angelic experiences are too common not to arouse undying desire, and the vast majority will, from their own special knowledge, affirm the supernatural explanation, and say—

"Oh, World, if thou deny it
Stand thou on that side—for on this am I!"

And considering the troubles, and pains, and perplexities that beset us on every hand—

"Well may our hearts have faith that blessings come
Streaming from founts along the starry sky,
With Angels; when their own untroubled home
They leave, and speed a mighty embassy
To visit earthly chambers—and for whom?
For those who God's forbearance hourly try,
For those who seek His help, and for His mercy sigh."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE RUNAWAY BRIDEGROOM

CAPTAIN JANSEN came home in a very good humor, bringing with him a London letter for Lady Rose. "Now I shall know what the world is up to," she said, "and will you all excuse me if I go upstairs to find out?"

"Go quickly, little lady," answered the Captain. "Remember your tea is nearly ready."

"Little I care about my tea; but, dear Captain, let no one take my chair. See, I have placed it close to your own."

"With my life I will defend it!" he cried, and then turning to Katrina, said, "There is some good news, I think, Katrina."

"Did it come with the new Governor?"

"It is the new Governor. A very pleasant, easy, well-bred gentleman. That is my thought of the man. He called the Councillors together on his arrival, and asked them if it was possible to issue the Stamps. One straight No they gave him. Will you believe it? He had brought with him a second shipment of Stamps. *Christus!* The Ministry as well as the King are going crazy."

"Well, then, what will be done with them?"

"To the City Hall they will go, no doubt. Young Peter De Lancey came with them, as the new Collector. The Liberty Boys visited him immediately—and he resigned. Very convincing words and ways have the Liberty Boys."

"Is Governor Colden still shut up in the fort?"

"Now, then, I come to my good news—the fort is to be dismantled. Already the gates are open and the cannon are

being removed. There was an angry dispute between Colden and Sir Henry Moore about the dismantling of the fort, and Colden declared it was a mad thing to do, but Sir Henry answered him bravely, 'We are in our own country; we are not among enemies. Surely we can trust our fellow citizens.' For Colden I am not sorry. Much trouble he made. Much expense he put the city to. Every man felt that, and when he rode away, his face was black with anger, and no one looked at him, and no one spoke to him, and many turned their backs to him and would not even see him. Poor old man! The government has no rewards for him, no thanks even, Katrina, and the people hate him."

"That is right for the government. He gave up the Stamps! The English government does not forgive a Governor who gives up anything belonging to England. No, indeed. If Batavius gave up one of thy ships to the pirates, what would thou say to him?"

"Batavius would not do such a cowardly thing. He would scuttle the ship, or blow her up, and go to the bottom with her. Very different is that case—Colden was bewildered. So many opinions, so many ways, he knew not what to take."

"Just one right way for him was there. Thou would have taken it, and followed it, even though it led to death. If for the Stamps Colden had died, or even fought, the government would have had honors and rewards for him, or his family—a failure no government acknowledges. That is right—for the government."

"But all wrong for the people governed, perhaps."

"He had nothing to do with that."

"Women see things a little aslant, Katrina."

At this point Batavius entered. Cross and glum he looked, but when Virginia lifted her head with a smile, he became radiant and began to chatter—he had been with the naval

officers—the new Governor had been introduced to him—he had condescended to remark on the fine weather, and Batavius had answered, “New York looked for fine weather now, both political and natural. The Governor thought it a very clever remark. I observed that,” commented Batavius, “for it is my way to observe everything.”

“Well, it was not a bad compliment,” replied the Captain.

“But I think Batavius might have made it much better,” and Virginia looked with rosy smiles into her father’s face.

“Well, then, how?”

“He might have said, ‘If your Excellency had only come three months ago we should doubtless have had a much earlier and better harvest. Our corn and wheat have been slim, and our fruit something of a failure; but had your Excellency been here no doubt our barns would have been running over.’”

Captain Jansen roared with mirth; Batavius looked into the sweet, innocent face doubtfully. What did the girl mean? Was she making fun of the Governor? He rubbed his chin with his left hand, and answered thoughtfully—

“Well, I know not. If I judge correctly—and I generally do—I believe I said just sufficient. Afterwards I noticed Sir Henry talking to General Gage, and they looked at me, and at my dress. But I was not astonished. I have experienced much approval—I may say admiration—lately. I should have stayed and dined with the notables, but”—then he caught that compelling look in Virginia’s eyes, and dropping his voice, he added—“I was not asked by any one. So here I came.”

“Here thou art welcome,” answered Captain Jansen heartily. “Draw thy chair to the table.”

“The army like me not,” continued the offended man. “I have been too kind to the naval officers, and John Ben-

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son told me the army and navy men were always at swords' points."

"When John Benson told thee that he was not making good use of his time. Draw thy chair to the table. Here is dinner enough, and good company enough, for any man."

They were just seating themselves when Rose reëntered the room. She gave Batavius a glance full of mischief and triumph, and then took the seat the Captain had kept for her, between himself and Virginia. As she sat down, she put her hand in Virginia's, and somehow there was a handful of good news in her clasp. Then she looked around and asked, "Has no one any remarks to make about my appearance? Really, it is not worth while making alterations in this house; they are never noticed." And again she asked, "Is no one going to make a remark?"

Then all looked at the little lady, and saw that she had brushed her hair straight backward. It was smooth as a bird's wing, not a straying hair was to be seen, and Madame said:

"In that fashion I like thy hair. It is the old Dutch fashion. A little cap, or a ribbon snood, would make thee a Holland maid."

"The way you wear your hair is a very serious matter," said Rose. "I learned that from the Court hairdresser, and he surely ought to know. When my aunt went first to London she wore her hair as I generally do—all curls, and twirls, and runaway crinkles, and straying, waving rings, and little lovelocks. And the Court hairdresser shook his head sorrowfully, and took a brush and swept all the pretty fal-lals clear off her forehead. 'Now, Duchess, you may see the difference!' he cried. 'Now you look wise, full of the nobilities, of the modesties—yes, Duchess, now you look even good! Make uncovered the brow, *presto!* the animal

goes, and lo! the angel!' So Aunt had her hair brushed backward, and became an earthly angel, full of the nobilities, modesties, and such like."

"And in that way does she yet wear it?" asked Virginia.

Rose sighed heavily and answered, "No, the Duke was so ungrateful as to prefer the Duchess with the fal-lals over her brow, and lo! the angel disappeared again. But we were not inconsolable. Aunt was better tempered, and had no headaches, and was nicer to live with. Do I look angelic, Virginia?"

"Not more so than usual."

"I am of the Duke's opinion," interrupted Captain Jansen. "I like the curls, and twirls, and lovelocks."

"My own opinion, Captain, and I am going back to them in an hour or two. But first I must hear what Captain De Vries has to say."

"I like the Dutch fashion best," he answered, but he spoke slowly and irresolutely, as if still pondering the question, and Rose advised every one to admire Captain De Vries's face—"It is full of considerations," she said; "if he was only as wise as he looks, what miracles of good advice he could give us! Oh, Madame, your tea is delicious!" she continued. "Boston tea is nothing but some poor skimming dish beside it."

"I hope then," said Madame, "you got a good letter from London—full of good news."

"Upon my honor, it is full of wonderful news—romantic news—quite unexpected, too."

"Does it concern the Stamp Act?" asked Captain Jansen.

"Or his Majesty?" asked Madame.

"His Majesty has nothing to do with my news. It is about a person we all of us know much better."

"Perhaps Mr. Franklin," suggested Virginia.

"No. I will stop all your guessing and tell you plainly

that the whole long eight pages of my letter was about our old friend Lieutenant Joris Artaveldt."

"Oh! oh!" cried Batavius, "has he been getting into mischief and trouble? I expected it—and my expectations are usually correct—also, he is touchy, proud, has no experience, and no self-control—a mere boy, not fit to be turned loose in London."

"You are altogether wrong, Captain. He is the very child of Good Fortune, the very hero of Romance. All London is raving about his luck—for his cousin, the eccentric Squire of Settlebourne, put fifty thousand guineas in the Bank of England for him on his birthday. It was an absolute gift."

"I believe nothing of such nonsense!" said Batavius with angry scorn.

"My aunt's word against your opinion, sir, every time!"

"Well, then, little lady, what says your aunt? The whole story tell to us. That will be best."

"She says the mother of this wonderful youth was a Miss Agatha Settle of Settlebourne—a great beauty, and a great horsewoman."

"That is the truth," said the Captain. "I remember when Justice Artaveldt brought her here."

"The present Squire was her cousin, and he loved her, and has remained a bachelor for her sake."

"Why the deuce should he do that?" asked Batavius. "There are women enough to have, and to spare, and——"

"There was only one Agatha Settle, and the Squire missed her. Lord! Captain De Vries, if you interrupt me again I shall ask that you be put out of hearing. When Joris visited him he took an instant and passionate liking for the youth, vowed that he was the image of his adorable mother, and that he should be as his own son for her sake. In a

few days Joris had set him on fire about American affairs, and as he was member of Parliament for Settlebourne, he resolved to go to London and tell the Ministry what he thought of their unconstitutional robbery. So to London they went, and the Squire suddenly appeared on the floor of the House of Commons, and thundered such a speech in the ears of its members that the House was in an uproar. Mr. Pitt thanked him, the Opposition benches cheered him, the newspapers vowed such fiery, vituperative eloquence had never been heard since Cromwell's day."

"A fine old man," said Madame. "Very much I like him."

"He found himself also the hero of the streets. The hungry, idle workmen followed him in crowds, entreating him to keep on 'standing up' for them; so he really had his head in the stars about his eloquence."

"He must be more than fifty years old," said Virginia. "Did nobody know before that he was eloquent?"

"My aunt says he had been known at Settlebourne all his life for his wealth of words when things went wrong in the woods, or stables, or when the fox ran to cover instead of giving the hunt a proper day's sport. But he never found out what his Yorkshire blunt directness of speech was worth till he tried it on the sleepy members of Parliament and woke them up, as if he had blown a war trumpet in their ears. They liked it. They laughed, and stamped, and cheered, and shouted 'Go on! Go on!' and the Duchess says he and Mr. Pitt hold the repeal of the Stamp Act in their hands—or tongues."

"I thought Joris——"

"*Lieutenant Artaveldt* from you, Captain De Vries."

"Well, then, I thought he was against the colonists."

"You usually think wrong, Captain De Vries. In his father's house he put the fifth clause of the Decalogue before

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the Stamp Act—but as soon as he was free to make or mar his own life, he spoke his own words.”

“Never mind, Batavius,” said Madame. “Very interesting is the story of Joris—go on with it.”

“Lord! I hardly know where to begin.”

“My Lady Rose, are you telling us the truth? Or is it a romance the Duchess has invented?”

“Captain De Vries, the truth is good enough for me, who am content with my fortune. Your passion is only for money, therefore you lie and prosper—and think others as bad as yourself.”

“In business, my lady——”

“Business!” she ejaculated scornfully. “Business! I roll in a higher orb!” Then turning to Madame, she continued, “I will pass by the adoration of London society for Lieutenant Artaveldt—the balls given him by noble ladies—the dinners by aristocratic clubs—the pleasure gardens—gambling and racing—and come to the love-making!”

“Ah! ah! I thought so!”

“Be still, Batavius.”

“My Virginia, I will, but——”

“Be still.”

“You must know,” continued Rose, “that in all these diversions Joris and his cousin were close companions. Suddenly Lady Molly Trefuses appeared, and the Squire was eager for Joris to marry her. Lady Molly was pleased with the proposal, but my aunt says Joris would not listen to it. He vowed he would be a bachelor like his cousin, and for the same reason; so the lovely Trefuses, with her easy fortune, and her pretty Cornish castle, is disappointed and disconsolate. Since then the Squire has given him fifty thousand guineas. I know no more in particular—but surely this is enough.”

During this last sentence Rose had been gently touching

Virginia's foot with her own, and when Virginia looked up, it was to reveal eyes full of light, cheeks tinted like a rose, a mouth tremulous with happy smiles, words that were like spoken laughter—a girl altogether full of hope, tenderly thinking of the past love, and radiantly trusting for its future. The room seemed full of Joris; not even the hatred of Batavius could darken its happy influence; and hours afterward the girls, sitting alone, read and re-read the wonderful letter, and then took its promise into the Land of Dreams with them.

The Captain and Madame were equally impressed by the good fortune of Joris—but they took the facts differently. Jansen smoked silently over their consideration. Madame knit some angry thoughts into her stocking. She knew her husband was longing to talk over the subject, but she would not begin it. At length he said dubiously, "A queer story Lady Rose has told us—dost thou believe it, Katrina?"

"Every word."

"The other day I met Justice Artaveldt, and I thought he walked as if he owned the earth."

"A very fine, fortunate son he owns. Virginia knew who and what she was loving. Thou hast spoiled her life, and broken her heart."

"If I was thee I would talk some common sense. Very happy Virginia has looked these last days. What did I tell thee? I am right. All women pretend not to like the man they have to marry, and then about the same man they turn crazy. They would marry him, and no other. Virginia is like the rest. Very contented she is now with Batavius, and the wedding is all right.

"That is not my thought. Virginia hates Batavius."

"No! No!"

"Hates him worse than ever. Why she has borne him

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better lately, I know not—but I think she intends to kill herself.”

“*Hush-h*, Katrina! Ashamed thou ought to be to think such things. Thou, too, wished her to marry Batavius.”

“I? Never! I told thee from the first it was wrong. I never liked the man. I always liked Joris. A lovely couple Joris and Virginia would have made. But no! Thine own way thou would have, even if it killed the dear one. And surely I think she will kill herself—night and day I am watching her.”

“Many times thou hast said to me, ‘Batavius would make a good husband.’”

“For some women, yes. For Virginia he is the last man in the world. She hates him.”

“Why?”

“Can I tell why men and women love or hate each other?”

“Lady Rose helped on the hatred.”

“Perhaps.”

“And now she will marry our Arent. I like not that bargain.”

“Meddle not with it. Enough of sorrow has come through thy determination to marry poor Virginia as was thy will and pleasure. About ships thou art clever; about women, very foolish and ignorant art thou. If thou could have left Virginia and her lover alone, rich and happy she might have been. But! So it is! Men will meddle.”

“Would thou like her to go and live in England among Episcopalists and atheists? As for the Court and society life in London, it is at the gates of Tophet. What was it Lady Rose spoke of but theaters, and dance gardens, gambling, and such like?”

“Lady Rose is sweet and good, and she was reared—as thou says—at the gates of Tophet. The King is very reli-

gious; the Queen also, and Mr. Whitfield preaches to the nobility. Virginia is not good because she was born in New York; and knows the Heidelberg Catechism, and goes to the Dutch kirk. In London she would do right, just as in this house, and it would be far better for her to be singing and having some happy hours in London than cleaning her house and cooking for that ugly Batavius De Vries in New York. I tell thee, I am heartsick this night, and I tell thee plainly, I fear for her with that man. He hates her more than he loves her; and in some bad hour, hate makes murder. And it will be thy fault—whatever trouble comes.”

“I will go away from thy cruel words. If things are so in thy sight, why did thou not speak to me before this?”

“I did speak often. Thou would not listen.”

“If harm comes to Virginia I will blame thee. I will say, ‘Thou foresaw—I did not. Thou ought to have warned me.’ I know what is the matter with thee. It is all because Joris has got fifty thousand guineas, and so thou art cross and disappointed. Perhaps that is a made-up story. Perhaps Batavius has fifty thousand guineas! Perhaps he has even more!”

“For the money I care not. It is the men.”

“Batavius is as good as the other. I stand to that. And I wish to-morrow was the wedding day.”

“Perhaps there will not be any wedding day.”

“Why?”

“I know not the why. But dost thou think Virginia is contented because she has begun to like Batavius? Little thou knowest of her. Or that she will ever be his wife?”

“I am sure she will. Next Tuesday is the set day.”

“Thou art sillier to-night than is common. Go to thy bed, and think over thy foolishness, and ask the good God to show thee some way out of it.”

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"I have not had my bedtime bite."

"No more food will be brought out this night."

"Nor my glass of hot Hollands?"

"There is no boiling water. The Hollands is locked in the cupboard. I shall not unlock anything."

"Thou art an ill-tempered woman. To-morrow I will not speak to thee."

"Not for many days will I speak to thee—unless thou art a more reasonable man."

Then she began in a shrill tone to sing the night psalm, and Jansen, after a few moments of resentful consideration, went out of the room, clashing the door after him. And the psalm never stopped or wavered, although a smile, not exactly devotional, accompanied the last lines.

At the same hour, Batavius sat in the cabin of *The Arms of Stuyvesant* in a passion which forbade him to seek company of any kind. Indeed, he wished to be alone in order that he might indulge it with satisfactory freedom. Hitherto he had always asserted the world and its affairs to be well managed by the power he called Providence. Upon the whole, he had been satisfied with the amount of favor vouchsafed him by that power. If people were not happy, he was angry with their discontent. He was never discontented. If they were poor, he disliked them because he considered it their own fault. He knew Providence would never let a man be without money in his pocket, or an overcoat on his back in cold weather, if he did his duty. But if men would hire Lutheran bookkeepers, and Roman Catholic servants, and talk politics instead of business, how could they expect the blessing of Providence? In these ways, or others equally foolish, they sold their share of good fortune for a mess of pottage. Batavius De Vries acted with more discretion, and the result was exactly what he expected—he had money, he had a good business, he kept no company but

with those on the top of the tree—even the Governor always moved to him; sometimes he even stopped to speak, and every one knew that the name of Batavius De Vries was known on many exchanges of the world for business responsibility and good financial judgment.

But this night he felt that he must reverse his opinions, and he was morally adrift. What was he to think of a Providence that had, without reason, suddenly abandoned his just cause, and heaped favors upon his rival—an unworthy young vagabond like Joris Artaveldt? For he was sure Joris was every way unworthy. What had he done to merit fifty thousand guineas? Only happened to look like his mother, and for that accident fifty thousand guineas had been given him. No one had ever given Batavius a farthing because he looked like his mother. It was a ridiculous reason for making a man rich. How could a wise, considerate Providence allow such injustice?

And as for Joris being the idol of London society, and refusing the hand of Lady Molly Trefuses, he did not believe a word of such nonsense. It was one of Rose Harley's lies, and the devil knew she had always hundreds ready. It was unnatural, it was even wicked, to suppose a sane man would refuse a titled lady, with youth and beauty, a good fortune, and a fair castle in Cornwall to bestow. *Pooh! Pooh!* Did the woman think he was fool enough to believe such a story? Let her put her dreams in a novel book for silly girls to read. Batavius De Vries—who knew the world—only laughed at her.

And yet he did not laugh—far from it; he thumped the table as he talked, as if he wished to smash it to pieces. Every sentence was uttered with a blow, and oaths which would defile the letters of any alphabet used to express them. For Batavius had a fine assortment of curses from every land under the sun. True, pagans seldom use their gods

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to swear with, but they have a choice variety of cruel maledictions, and Batavius had found it good for his business to learn these in many languages of which he learned no other words.

So when he came at last by way of Joris and Virginia to his final bitter complaint—the *Strawberry Handkerchief*—his tongue was still rich in imprecations, though his hands were bleeding with the blows he had given the table, as proxy for the men and women he hated. At this hour their number was large enough to satisfy the worst temper in the world. Captain Jansen was doubtful, Katrina was false, Lady Rose was doubly false, Virginia was cruel and ungrateful, and he believed almost a witch. And he had loved her since she was in her cradle—and given her a fortune in gems and rich goods.

“I hate her!” he growled, with a blow and a choice Malayan anathema, “but also I love her. She tortures me, but I love her! She cowers and frightens me, but I love her! There was never a beauty like her, and by every drop of blood in my body, I swear she shall be my wife. Then I will teach her High Mightiness how to crawl on her knees to me. As for that Strawberry Handkerchief, my mind is made up—mine, it must be. A shame it is for her to keep it. A love token it was, between her and that good-for-nothing Artaveldt. But if in two pieces he tore it, into one thousand pieces will I tear it. I will grind it to dirt under my feet. To-morrow I shall see to that. No, I will not destroy it at once. I will spit upon it before her face, and vow it stinks of the cursed fool who threw it away. Oh, many a fine hour I shall get out of the Strawberry Handkerchief! Such a sickening fuss as those two girls made about it!”

In such self-torture he wore the night away, and the cold gray dawn was coming through the cabin ports when he fell

asleep. So it was afternoon when he opened his bloodshot eyes, and slowly became aware of an unusual noise in the city. Then he remembered that New York was going to give that day up to making a public holiday because the new Governor had come and was apparently inclined to favor the colonists.

"Such fools! Such double-dyed fools!" he muttered. "In a month the name of Sir Henry Moore will do to curse with—unless he does just what they want him to do—and I hope to God he won't say 'Good-morning, gentleman,' if they wish it. Colden always bowed to me, sometimes he spoke to me. This Sir Henry Moore looked at me yesterday in a very curious way. He wasn't civil—no, damn him, he wasn't civil! I hope he will show them all what an easy, well-bred gentleman can do in the way of tyranny. To-day they will get drunk in his honor, to-morrow they will begin to badger him about the Stamp Act and their rights. Rights! Rights! Rights! I am sick to my stomach with that word, Thank God I am a Dutchman! My government looks after my 'rights,' and I get some time to look after my business."

He did not, as usual, go to the King's Arms for breakfast. He walked his own deck, or sat in his own cabin all day, trying to arrange his thoughts, and decide on his course of action. For he felt that a change was coming—that, in fact, it must come. He could not endure his present position. He must at least have his rights as a lover, and he repeated the word "rights" to loud laughter, which suddenly ceased in sullen, silent anger. He had remembered the Strawberry Handkerchief, and the trifle of torn cambric assumed an unreasonable importance in his eyes. That was a right he must and would have. In his cowardly, superstitious heart he took it for a manifest sign. If he succeeded in obtaining the Handkerchief he would carry all

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before his will. If he failed—but then, he would not fail—for as soon as he was certain of its location, he would take it by force if necessary—a kind of laughing force—made an obligation by his love. He flattered himself that B. D. V. knew just how to manage a mimic warfare of that kind. Besides, he considered that Katrina might help him. Surely, when the lover was within four days of being the husband, he might fairly ask that the love token belonging to a rival be surrendered.

When it was nearly dark he left the ship, went to Maiden Lane for a meal, and then, through crowds of men building bonfires, to the Van Vroom house. It was darker than usual, for supper was over, Katrina busy in the spinning-room, the Captain gone to the stable, and Lady Rose in her room writing a letter to Arent. She left Virginia sitting by the parlor fire, but the girl suddenly remembering a lotion her father needed for one of the horses, threw on her red riding hood and cloak, and ran to the stable with it. As it was very cold, she returned immediately, and as she opened the door at the west end of the hall, Batavius opened the one opposite it, at the east end. The little excitement of her run through the frosty garden, and the vivid scarlet of her hood and cloak, lent her, in the shadowy light of the hall, a mysterious and entrancing beauty.

In a moment her very presence changed the temper of the angry man.

"My Virginia!" he cried. "My Virginia, listen to me! Speak with me! I wish to say only what will please thee, dear one—nothing else."

"Well, then, Batavius, come into the parlor. Sit down."

"Thy hand—surely I may touch thy hand."

"No."

"But why?"

"Once you touched my lips—fraudulently and shame-

fully; once you grasped my arm, suddenly and cruelly. I vowed then you should never touch me again."

"But how? What mean you? On Tuesday we are to be married, three days hence, my beauty! My wife!"

"What will happen in three days you know not, and I know not. But though every domine in America married me to you in three days, I should never be your wife. Between us there is a wall, invisible, but solid as adamant. Cross it you can not."

"Why?"

"You will not be permitted."

"Rubbish! Paltry rubbish! I will soon show you a different story. Stop, Virginia! Do not speak to me, do not look at me, till I ask you one or two questions. First, why will you not love me? Am I so ugly in your eyes?"

"Yes."

"Ugly men are often well loved."

"From the first day of your return, I told you the whole truth."

"The whole truth? What then?"

"That I loved Joris Artaveldt, that I had promised to marry him, and would marry no one else."

"All lovers must have their rivals. That I have seen. They try to get the better of each other. Very good; there is nothing unfair in that. Joris had his chance. I had mine."

"It was all unfair. No chance at all had Joris. You had my father, and even my mother then, on your side. Joris was not allowed to see me, speak to me, or write to me, and yet, alas! by a mere accident, you kissed my lips in his sight, and so sent him away, far away from me with a cruel misunderstanding in his heart. Forgive that kiss? No, I will not! It will burn my lips forever—unless Joris should come to know the truth, and kiss the wrong away."

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"Wait yet—one moment. There is a question you must answer me. The Strawberry Handkerchief that Joris tore and threw at your feet—where is it? I want it."

"*You* want my Handkerchief! My Handkerchief! Give it to you! No, no, indeed! It is mine only! Only mine!"

"Where is it?"

"I will not tell you."

"I want it. Have it I will. Will you hide a love gift from another man after you are my wife?"

"Yes."

"Such wickedness! Do you think I will allow that? I will not."

Virginia smiled, but made no other answer.

"I wonder what you are—witch or woman?"

No answer.

"Do you hear me?—witch or woman?"

No answer.

"Do you hear me?"

"No."

"God in Heaven! You can drive a man stark crazy! Where is my handkerchief?"

"Nothing about any handkerchief of yours is of interest to me."

"The torn handkerchief—the one Joris Artaveldt tore! You know which I mean—the love handkerchief—the ugly, cursed bit of a rag that Lady Rose flaunted and fussed over. It isn't worth a farthing, but I want it."

"All the gold in the world would not buy it from me. And you want it? *You!* To cast your eyes upon it, you are unworthy. To put it into your hands would be an insult to pure love."

"Unless you give it to me I will not marry you. Then, what will people say?"

"Thank you! Honor your word for once. What people will say—let them say. I care not."

"You are a bad woman not to care for your good name—a bad woman! I say it again. The devil only knows what else you are!"

"Captain De Vries!"

"My lady——"

"Lord! You must be drunk or mad! How dare you?"

"My lady——"

"I heard all you said. Pray what is the good of dressing yourself in fine clothes, if you talk to women like a black-guard—like a Thames waterman—like a beast whose senses are drowned in brandy?"

"I beg pardon, my lady——"

"Virginia may forgive you. I am not inclined to do so. Look you, Captain, the creature who blasphemes a good woman ought to go to the devil. He is fit for no better company."

"My lady, you know not all. I have been badly used. I am——"

"In faith, you have been too well used. Virginia is an angel. What are you?"

"A gentleman, I hope."

"Hope is lying to you."

"Upon my honor——"

"Honor is too subtle a thing for your nature." Then turning to Virginia, she said caressingly, "God's precious one! Kiss me, dear. Let us go upstairs. That low fellow is so angry—I suppose he might eat us."

At this moment Madame, followed by a negro carrying a box, appeared. She was a little excited, and did not observe the ill-tempered moods of those present. "Come into the parlor," she cried. "I have something to show you." Virginia and Rose followed her at once. Batavius hesitated,

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and Madame added, "Come, Batavius, it concerns you a little, I think."

The parlor was almost dark, but Batavius was eager to please. He sent the negro for candles, and then threw some logs of wood on the fire. In the meantime Madame and Rose unfastened the box, and in a few minutes simultaneously uttered a cry of delight. For there in a snowy enclosure lay a miracle of beauty—the wedding gown and veil of which the whole town had been talking. Madame spread it over a high chair, and Rose stood entranced before it. Her evident admiration quickly gave Batavius all the courage he needed to express himself.

"It is like moonlight sprinkled with stars!" she cried. "Oh, if I only knew what fairy to entreat, I would have a wedding frock just like it!"

"I bought it in Calcutta," said Batavius proudly. "A guinea a yard I paid for it."

"It is almost transparent," said Madame.

"Yes, I paid a guinea a yard for it. You do not get such stuff for any money now. Then I bought the pure silver leaf, found a clever silversmith, and paid him to cut out and fasten on the little stars. A great deal of money that cost me. But I do not count guineas where my Virginia is concerned—that is not my way."

"It is lovely! It is in good taste!" commented Rose.

"There it is, my lady. For my good taste in stuffs and gems I am known in all the great bazaars of India. No one offers me but the very best—that comes of my experience."

"And your fine taste, Captain."

"As you say, my lady. And it is a great satisfaction to me to find that I think about such things exactly as you do," and he stood with his hands in his pockets, proudly surveying the beautiful garment.

"But the veil is quite as exquisite; where did you get the veil, Captain?" asked Rose.

"In Poonah I bought the veil. I paid ten pounds for it. It is of the finest silver gauze. I cared not for the money."

"It is fit for a fairy bridal! And oh, the scent of it! The heavenly scent! What is it?"

"Jasmine, my lady. What jasmine scent is, no one knows until they go through an Indian valley."

Hitherto Virginia had not spoken. With eyes dropped she had cast some slant looks upon the dress and veil, but they were looks of curiosity more than of interest. At length Batavius went to her side, and said as softly as was possible to her—

"My Virginia, you will look like an angel in that dress."

"If I deserve the bad names you called me half an hour ago, no dress will make me an angel."

"I was mad—crazy with my love for you—pity me!"

"Batavius," said Madame, "throw on a couple more logs. Let us have a better light, then we shall see how the dress and veil will sparkle."

"That I will, moeder!" and with a conciliating expression he lifted a couple of cedar logs, and laid them on the fire. A bright blaze then illumined the white, gleaming, glittering garments, and Batavius smiled and glowed with pride and satisfaction.

"Moeder," he said, "will not the pearl chain and bracelets be most suitable ornaments?" Then turning to Rose he added, "For ten years I was buying pearls for the chain. As much as fifty pounds I paid for some, the others I won by my own——" then he hesitated; he saw the question of loot and spoils of battle in Rose's eyes, and in his confusion he stooped, picked up another cedar log, and threw it on the blazing fire. A shower of living sparks flew far and near, and some fell on the wedding garments.

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In a moment they were in flames. Rose, with a piercing cry, sprang forward to save them, but Madame held her back from the mounting blaze. Batavius, stupefied for one instant, saw in the next that all was lost; and with his booted foot passionately kicked the burning refuse of the wedding splendor on to the glowing hearth. In two or three minutes a handful of blackened tinder was all that remained of the lovely frock and veil. Virginia had risen to her feet, and with a face full of solemn awe and wonder, she speechlessly watched the rapid destruction. Rose cried undisguisedly. Madame wrung her hands and whimpered, "*O weel! O weel!*" Batavius looked at the débris, kicked it nearer the fire, and then trembling and terrified, reeled silently out of the room. He shut the parlor door as if there was death behind it; but a few moments afterwards the three women heard the front door clash with a force that seemed to shake the house.

But as soon as he was in the fresh, frosty air, he threw off the incubus of terror that held him in thrall while in Virginia's presence. It was true the fire was his own fault. No one had asked him to put on fresh cedar. But he told himself that Virginia had decreed the destruction of the gown and veil, and compelled him to perform the act. He was a very superstitious man at all times, but this evening's tragic events were more than he could bear—his quarrel with Rose—Virginia's indifference—the cold—the gloom—the fitful blazing of the cedar—the sudden shower of sparks—the rapid destruction of the light, inflammable materials—these influences weighed upon him like a heavy hand pressing him down to the ground. He stumbled along, feeling with a bitter certainty that all was over. All had been. There was no future for the hopes he had nursed so many years.

As he approached the city his first intent was to go to

Captain Lawson. "Such a thing to happen to Batavius De Vries!" he muttered. "Nothing like it ever happened to me before. I am bewitched! Winds and waves I can manage, but a woman who sees into a man's soul, who knows of what he is thinking! God in Heaven, who can bear that?"

When he arrived at Maiden Lane he changed his mind. "I will go to my ship," he thought; "there is enough of my devil in her to keep any other devil out of her;" and he quickened his steps, and was soon within the shelter of her locked cabin. Then he gave way to his feelings, which at this stage were more fearful than angry. He had often heard of haunted ships, and haunted captains, and a mysterious terror weighed upon his wrath. For once he could not find words to express himself—oaths of all kinds were inadequate. Blame? Only Batavius was to blame. Of his own will he had thrown on the fatal log. Reason? The whole affair was beyond reason. Two hours of silent misery brought him no result but a conviction that in some way or other Virginia was accountable for the tragedy. Suddenly there was a loud knocking at his cabin door, and he dared not move or answer it. How could he tell what misfortune was dogging his steps that night? It was therefore a tremendous relief when he heard Captain Lawson call—

"Are you within De Vries?"

"Yes, yes, yes!" he answered joyfully. "I will open the door. So glad am I to see you! I am at my wit's end—you are the friend I want. Come in! Come in!"

"By George, you look like a man in extremities, De Vries! What mischief is to pay for now?"

Then Batavius opened his whole heart. He told Captain Lawson everything, and he told it with such vivid vehemence of love, hatred, despair, greed, and terror, that the Englishman was both amazed and appalled. Was this the phlegmatic Dutchman?—this man raging with a frenzy of every

passion that can torture humanity? But he spoke no word until Batavius in an exhaustion, full of an awful dread, had finished the story of the fated wedding garments. Then he asked—

“Are you going to marry this girl? I have always seen that she hated you.”

“What can I do? Ever since she was a baby I have intended to marry her, and I have given her a fortune in pearls, and gems, and rich stuffs of all kinds. I thought they would be safe in her keeping till she brought them to me.”

“Let the gems and pearls go. I would not marry her for a diamond mine.”

“She is so beautiful——”

“Yes, but she is either insane, or very near insanity. She will kill herself—or you—in some hour of trouble. And insane people are wonderfully cunning. She will so arrange details that you will be hanged for her murder—unless she kills you—which I think likely—the girl hates you, De Vries.”

“If I only had the jewels! The beautiful jewels! They are worth thousands!”

“Are they worth more than your life?”

“What would you do?”

“Go to the other side of the world for a year.”

“Then that other one will come! And he will marry her, and she will give him my jewels—and I hate him.”

“Let the girl go. Let the jewels go, and save your own life. How is your business. Can you leave it?”

“Always I can leave it, or go with it, at an hour’s notice—that is my way.”

“A capital way, too. Then get out of New York as quick as you can.”

“When do you sail?”

"I shall get away with the early tide Sunday morning. Will you go with me?"

"Where to?"

"First to London, then to India."

"I must work. I can not be idle, when I am on a ship."

"I will now tell you something remarkable. Last night Lord Harley asked me if there was any possibility of inducing you to take charge of our transport ships bound for Calcutta. We spoke of your position, and I promised to see you to-day. It was this brought me here at this late hour. I had been waiting at the King's Arms, hoping you would, as usual, drop in to see me."

"What of my position and reward?"

"You would be Sailing Master Extraordinary; and rank as Captain with a Captain's pay—and you know better than I do, that when the troops are safely landed, we can pay ourselves in India very well."

"I know. Where, and when, would I receive my commission?"

"In London, from the Admiralty Board. Until then, sail as my guest."

"No, I will carry *The Destroyer* across the Atlantic. I will show your sailors what a ship will do for a man at the wheel who masters her. Idle at sea I could not be."

At these words Lawson stretched out his hand to Bata-vius. "The King will thank you," he said; "the Board will reward you well, and I can not say how grateful I shall be for your company, and your assistance. We shall have a good voyage, De Vries, if you go with us."

"I will go. My word is my bond. I never break it—that is not my way. In the morning I will put my affairs in a safe hand."

"Do not see that girl again."

"To speak the truth,—and I like the truth,—I am afraid

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of her. I do not wish to see her again. To me, she is very unlucky. Yes, indeed!"

"Her father——"

"None of the Van Vrooms will I see. Behind my back I will cast every thought of them."

"That is a wise decision. Now tell me at what hour you will board *The Destroyer*?"

Batavius was thoughtful for a few minutes; then with a smile of malicious pleasure he said, "To-morrow at eight o'clock I will meet you at the King's Arms. We will eat and drink, and I will apparently drink too much. At ten o'clock you will ask the landlord to send a couple of his men to *The Arms of Stuyvesant* with me, as you are ordered to leave by the next tide. That night before meeting you, I will give my watchman a night on shore, and your long boat can wait for me. At midnight we will lift the anchors."

"Then I must get a pilot on board before dark."

"Pilot? What for? I will take *The Destroyer* out to sea. Dark or light it matters not to me. I know the river as well as my own cabin. But there is a full tide at midnight, and we will dance out to the Atlantic with it. Then if the ship behaves herself, any wind that blows will be a right wind; let it do its worst, we will kiss it in its teeth."

"You are like yourself again, De Vries. I am glad to see the change."

"You will see a greater change when I get my hands on the wheel, and feel the ship answering me and the winds speeding me, and the waves talking to me. The real De Vries then, you will see. A poor landsman is Batavius De Vries, but at sea you'll find it hard to match me. I say that, because it is the truth, and I am not ashamed of the truth. Lawson, I have dropped this hour an awful weight. Women may go to the devil for me. That is where they ought to go. No other being can make them out. Give me

a ship, and the blue waves, and the white sea birds, and the nearest woman ten thousand miles away."

"Then we meet to-morrow night at eight o'clock at the King's Arms?"

"I shall be there—ready to sail."

"To-morrow, we begin life together. Work and a friend are better than a wife."

"The wife I wanted is lost. Much else is lost. I tell you, Captain, my life is like a ship that has been wrecked."

"Your life is safe. Think of that and be thankful. Good-night!"

"Good-night!"

In the meantime, consternation filled the Van Vroom household. Madame wept freely, and Rose was much troubled. In her heart she feared Virginia had something to do with the tragic fate of such exquisite garments; for she offered no explanation, nor yet made any complaint. Her silence was baffling and provoking. A sudden feeling of mutual dissatisfaction was through the house; and Rose felt almost glad that her visit would be over in three days. She wanted her own world and its environments. *Presence*, which she could not see, or talk with, and which revealed itself in such unusual ways, was not welcome to her. She thought also that Virginia was changed—for she did not realize the long, terrible strain of things "not sure" which the girl had been obliged to bear without companionship or sympathy. Neither did she understand that as long as suspense lasted, silence was a serious necessity to a nature so tender, so pious, and so sensitive. She herself, under similar circumstances, would have talked with every one—asked every one's opinion—and so lost herself and any spiritual prescience in a multitude of doubts and denials, fears and reluctances.

The next day Madame watched continually for the pro-

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spective bridegroom. She thought he would come early in the morning, to talk over the best wedding dress now possible. But he did not come. His place was empty at the dinner table. The afternoon passed, the *avondmaal* was eaten without him, and when the house was closed, and every one supposedly asleep, Madame could no longer restrain her fears. She told her husband everything, and as she talked, his large rosy face grew set and white, he moved restlessly in his chair, clasp and unclasp his hand, and when Katrina said, "He kicked the blazing dress and veil into the fire, and left the house without a word, and has not come near us to-day," the troubled man could only exclaim, over and over—

"My God! My God! What shall we do "

There was no sleep that night for either Jansen or Katrina, but Jansen was sure Batavius would be in the kirk. He was not there, and when the service was over, the Captain walked hurriedly down to *The Arms of Stuyvesant*. He might be ill, he might have taken a glass too much from the little black Indian bottle. As soon as he reached the pier, he saw the watchman walking about the deck of *The Arms of Stuyvesant*, but her Captain was not on board. The watch said "he had not seen him since seven o'clock on the previous evening. At that hour he permitted him to leave the ship for the night."

"What time did you return this morning?"

"Half-past eight, Captain."

"Was Captain De Vries here then?"

"No. He had gone to the King's Arms for breakfast, I suppose. From there he would likely go to the kirk. That is his usual way."

Then Jansen went to the King's Arms. The landlord told him that Captain Lawson and Captain De Vries had been together in the house until ten o'clock of the previous

night. At that hour, he said, Captain Lawson was obliged, by an unexpected order, to sail; and as Captain De Vries was too much under liquor to take care of himself, he had sent two of his tapsters with him to *The Arms of Stuyvesant*."

Jansen then interviewed the two men. They declared they had taken Captain De Vries as directed, to his own ship. They said there was no watch in sight, but a lamp was burning in the Captain's cabin, and so they carried him to his own bunk and laid him in it. Beyond that, they knew nothing.

"Was he sober enough to know when you laid him down?" asked Jansen.

One man thought he was, the other was sure he was not.

With these particulars Jansen went home. Katrina looked with pitiful anxiety into his face. He shook his head, and then in a hopeless voice said, "He has either run away with Lawson, or in his drunken sleep got up to find Lawson, stepped overboard, and been drowned. One of these conclusions we must come to, Katrina, there is nothing else. What we are to do, God only knows. I am stupid, Katrina. My good sense is leaving me."

"Not so, Jansen. It is now that thy good sense is wanted. Wilt thou turn thy back on trouble? That is not thy way. Think once how much worse things might have been."

"There is no worse, Katrina, to a sorrow like this."

"Very much mistaken art thou. It would have been worse if Virginia had run away—or killed herself—and Batavius remained here. If he is drowned, is he not better drowned than our Virginia? And only think how fortunate it is that he was last seen at the King's Arms? If all trace of Batavius had stopped with thee, and me, and Virginia, what might people have thought, and said, and done? Suspicion would follow us and might land us in prison—all our life days, it might shadow us. For this great deliverance,

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thank God, and pluck up thy heart ; and early in the morning begin to search for the cowardly scoundrel. And yet again thank God, that he is not married to thy daughter."

In accord with this advice, the city was startled soon after daylight by the bellman calling through all its streets and public places, "The Disappearance of Captain Batavius De Vries," and offering a reward of two hundred pounds for any true information concerning him, dead or alive. Men and women ran to their doors, or threw up their windows to listen to the astonishing news, and then lingered over their breakfasts to discuss its likelihood and consequences. Some of Katrina's most familiar acquaintances hastened at once to the Van Vroom house to give her their sympathy and advice, and Katrina was hard set to keep her senses and her temper, while reiterating the little she knew or thought likely.

"He was here on Friday evening, and helped to unpack the wedding dress and veil," she explained, "and he wanted more light, and threw a fresh log on the fire, and there flew out a shower of sparks and set the dress in a blaze. It was his own fault, and he seemed much distressed. Without a word he went away immediately, and since, we have neither seen nor heard from him."

This explanation was all that she would give. If any one expressed pity, she looked her dissent ; or, if she thought their expression ill-natured, she added in unmistakable terms her satisfaction in the man's flight or disappearance. Sick at heart with anger, chagrin, and pity for her child, she yet kept for all her visitors such a brave satisfaction in the event that many thought her unfeeling, and hardly wondered Batavius had feared to enter a family where he was so little liked.

About noon, Rose received the token from her father which assured her that Batavius was far out at sea ; with

the further instruction that she must be ready to sail early on the following morning. She looked thoughtfully at Virginia. "Would it please you to know certainly that Batavius is alive and happy?" she asked.

"I do know it, Rose. If I might go now, and tell my fader and moeder the truth, that would please me."

"As soon as I am on my father's ship, tell them everything. I am going away early in the morning; until then let me keep their good-will; because, you know, I did what was done, all for love of you."

"And the King."

"And the King. There was no harm in that. Two good reasons are better than one. Come, dear, help me to pack my trunk, and let us talk about Arent. He is always an interesting subject."

"I do not think Arent was very brotherly to me. He ought to have seen how wretched I was, and helped me. Harry Rutgers saw it."

"Arent did offer to help you."

"He offered me six minutes' time."

"And as for Harry, with all his senses he is in love with you. Brothers and lovers are different varieties of men.

" 'Brothers we have by the dozen,
But a lover is a different thing.' "

So the day went wearily past, and Jansen returned in the evening much depressed. He had been wounded on every side, and perhaps self-wounded worst of all. On the morrow he was to meet the Domine and Elders of the kirk, and exonerate himself in their sight; also the Sheriff had politely intimated "that, as a matter of form, he would call on Madame and Miss Van Vroom, and take down the peculiar events of the last visit of Batavius De Vries at their house. It was not impossible this testimony might be of use

in the future." Jansen, burning with indignation, agreed with him as calmly as possible. But oh, how the old man suffered! And in another way how Katrina suffered!

Rose simply wondered at their suffering. She thought they ought to rejoice in their release from such a cowardly creature, for she had no understanding whatever of that sensitive regard for popular approval which, when wounded, is a grief with ten thousand stings to people jealous of their good names, and careful of what their fellow citizens think and say of them.

It was a cheerless evening. The Captain scarcely spoke. Katrina was almost equally silent, and Virginia and Rose went early upstairs. There they could at least talk of Joris and Arent, and anticipate a future not to be named before the Captain and Katrina in their present hour of distress.

"To-morrow was to have been your wedding day, Virginia, but thank goodness, that terror is now past! I will see Joris as soon as I reach London, and when he hears the whole truth, there will not be found a ship swift enough to bring him to you."

"And you will certainly tell him the whole truth, Rose?"

"Every word of it. In faith, I will spare him nothing."

"And also, you must tell me the whole truth. If Joris has ceased to love me, do not try to spare me. I do not wish to keep a false hope in my heart."

"If I was you, I would not distrust Joris. I believe, in my soul, he is truer to you than you are to him. I am afraid you think too much about sky people. They are very noble and helpful, and everything else lovely, but while you are in the world, stick to worldly people—like Rose Harley, for instance. It will only be a short farewell between us, Virginia. You will come to London and see me made your sister, will you not? There will be an archbishop to say the magic words, and one or two bishops to 'Amen' it."

Early next morning the eventful visitor departed. More or less she had pervaded and influenced Virginia's life for nearly a year.

And yet all were sensible of some relief when the little lady turned her head at the corner, and threw back a last sweet resonant "Good-bye!" Madame sighed, and then said plainly—

"A good voyage I hope she may have, but so glad am I to be free from all strangers! And tell me now, what is thy wish, my dear one?"

"Moeder, just one thing I want—to be alone for two or three days."

"Have thy wish. No doubt there will come some women here, who will say they heard not of any change."

"Will they hurt thee, moeder? See them not. Let Amanda take a message."

"No, no! From any woman in New York I will not run. This week I have learned well what a cowardly thing it is to run away from any one, or any circumstance. I shall see all that call—I shall say, 'Well, then, dear madame, what is it you want? You know the wedding is not to be, and the reason you know. What then?' Not many questions will they ask, not long will they stay. Trouble not thyself about any of that kind."

Perhaps there was a little fear of Katrina, perhaps a true sympathy prevented intrusion, but not one of the invited guests called; so Katrina was not obliged either to defend herself, or reprove others. She kept her hands busy among her household goods, putting away those no longer needed, and generally restoring all things to their quiet, economical ordering.

The Captain did not return home until evening. He had spent part of the day in the Domine's study, relating to him and three of the Elders all the incidents which he believed

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had influenced Batavius. They all fully exonerated him, but the mere fact of having to make explanations about anything relating to himself or his family cut him to the heart. Still he kept in his store, or went about the streets, talking freely with every one who wished to talk, and showing as little emotion as if it was the weather he was discussing, instead of the frustrated marriage of his daughter, and the singular disappearance of the bridegroom.

But when he reached his home, Katrina was shocked at his appearance. For Jansen had really been assaulted in the very citadel of his nature. All day long he had borne the brunt of this encounter, and never flinched; but on his own hearthstone he broke utterly down. "My good name is gone, Katrina," he sobbed, holding his bowed head in his hands. "I have been examined! Jansen Van Vroom has been examined by the Domine, and such like men as Alexander Semple, and Tim Garry, and Steve Groesbeck asked me questions, Katrina, and thy Jan had to answer them—though God in Heaven knows it goes hard with me to lift my hat to some of them. Oh, Katrina! Katrina! I wish I had died before this day!"

Then she kissed him, and lifted his head against her breast, and vowed he would be fully justified very soon; and the words he did not like to say about Batavius, she said for him with all the special temper they called for. The tea came in, but he could not drink it—"There is a lump in my throat, I can neither eat nor drink, Katrina," he said, "and where then is Virginia?"

"She asked to stay alone in her room and be quiet. No wonder! Very tiresome was Rose Harley—always talking—always laughing—always making others laugh. I can not think how Virginia bore it so long."

"But in such trouble, a girl should want her moeder and her fader. When you can not talk about your trouble, it kills

you. I understand not her way. If she would cry and complain a little, and let us comfort her."

"Well, then, she gets comfort. I know not how."

Neither of them knew. Spiritually their child had come into a communion beyond their comprehension. To the parents, the noisy, human consolations of weeping and complaining in company were still needful. But Virginia had learned the way to a more Divine Consoler. She had found out—

That to be alone with Silence.
Is to be alone with God.

Hour after hour passed. Jansen could do nothing but talk, wonder, surmise, plan, and then go over and over the same ground. He went to his bedroom with the lump still in his throat, and sitting down by the fire, began all his trouble afresh. Katrina sat with him, watching for the moment when he would say, "Katrina, I can eat a little. Katrina, I can smoke my pipe now." A very sad old couple they were; and Virginia, sitting so still in her room, was little comfort to them; for they could not help believing she was suffering on her side of the tragedy, quite as much as themselves.

And at the same hour, Batavius and Captain Lawson were chatting and laughing in the cabin of *The Destroyer*. They had had a good dinner, the walnuts and port wine were between them, and Lawson sat admiring the easy strength with which Batavius crushed the nutshells between his big fingers, as he related with rude mirth some of his personal adventures in India. Nor was it likely either of them remembered the canceled wedding, or the sorrow and anxiety they had left behind them.

CHAPTER TWELVE

LIBERTY AND LOVE

FORTUNATELY this intense strain was lightened on the third day, for as young Peter De Lancey was talking to General Gage about the affair, Governor Moore interrupted the conversation—

"Gentlemen," he said, "De Vries did not disappear. He went away freely with his friend, Captain Lawson. Lord Harley told me he was to have a naval commission extraordinary, in order to take the transport fleet to India. He sailed *The Destroyer* himself out to sea, about midnight of Saturday last."

"It would have been good for many, if your Excellency had said these words earlier."

"But it would have been ill for the King's ships, if they had been detained, questioned, or searched, and you know, gentlemen, the temper of New York on the subject of the English navy taking American sailors. Indeed, I have no doubt the Liberty Boys, and others, will believe De Vries to have been kidnaped for the India service, even against my assertions."

"I suppose, Governor," said De Lancey, "this information may now be made public?"

"It ought to be made public at once. De Vries is safe and in honorable service at his own desire. No one ought to suffer blame, or shame, or anxiety on his account."

These decisive words from Sir Henry—turning a supposed tragedy into an ordinary business engagement—quickly settled the public interest in the fate of Batavius. "It is all

plain enough," said Harry Rutgers. "Batavius De Vries is a coward, and was going to do a cowardly, shameful thing to Van Vroom's daughter, so he sneaked out of the father's way. Lawson and Lord Harley did not want their ships searched for kidnaped American sailors,—for they doubtless both had some,—so the three interests were best served by slipping away at midnight. I am sure also," he continued with rising anger, "it gave De Vries pleasure to anticipate the shame and suspicion he would cast on the Van Vrooms; and the little notoriety which would for a couple of days be his share of the disgraceful business. 'I shall be the talk of the town,' he would say to Captain Lawson, and he would never for a moment suppose the talk would be in any spirit but that of praise and admiration for Batavius De Vries."

In a few days Peter Dieterich, the lawyer in whom Batavius put his trust, advertised *The Arms of Stuyvesant* for sale; and when the ship was sold, and the money it brought immediately invested in real estate for De Vries, all care as to the man's going and doings quickly died out.

"In a year or two, we shall see the creature swelling and waddling up Broadway again," said John Watts. "He will have more money, and more jewelry than ever; his morality and respectability will be as positive as usual; his politics, as wavering and unstable." And with some such words he passed outside the horizon of every one's care or interest.

In the Van Vroom household the oblivion to which he was consigned was still more marked. His memory was buried, his name forgotten without a single regret, and Katrina and Virginia put out of sight everything that could recall a man so cruel, cowardly and ungrateful. "Ungrateful, yes!" said Madame bitterly. "All the years of his youth and his manhood he has come to my house as to his home. He was made as a son. No money he gave me, no present, no word of thanks. Often I thought of that. Yes, to thee

he gave much, but only in keeping for himself thou had it; as soon as he called thee 'wife' all would have been his own. These things he considered. Now put him out of thy thoughts forever, and our tongues shall forget how to call his name."

It was not a difficult task, for public events were as exciting as ever, and Jansen sunk his private wrongs in his political enthusiasm. For in no degree had the Governor's suavity influenced the great mass of the citizens known as the Liberty Boys. In fact they were all the more alert and suspicious. Though they had compelled McEvers and young Peter De Lancey to resign their posts as stamp distributors for New York State, the former was under strict surveillance in his hiding place, and having said some unadvised words about "resuming his duties when the Act became operative," he was visited on December the second, and compelled to swear a perpetual renunciation. Hood, the Collector for Maryland, who was living at ex-Governor Colden's place on Long Island, was also forced to take the same oath.

One night, in the heart of winter, Jansen came home much excited. "What is the matter with thee?" asked Katrina, for the old man was whistling like a boy, and stamping his feet to his own music as he came up the frozen garden path.

"I will tell thee very soon. My slippers I want, and my long waistcoat, and my pipe, and some hot drink; these things are first, Katrina." But when all his wants had been attended to, he said with chuckling laughter—

"Now listen! Last night, when the snow fell so softly, and the clocks struck midnight, the Boys boarded the ship *Minerva*, just from London. They had been warned that she was to bring more Stamps. Her commander swore he had not a stamp on board; but they roused the whole crew and searched the ship from stem to stern. Plenty of strong

words they got,—and they gave. Writs, and processes, and damages were sworn at them; and hanging at the yard's arm was to be the price of their piratical assault; but little Billy Judd only laughed, and whistled, and searched. They found nothing on the *Minerva*, Katrina, but as soon as they touched the wharf they found a man waiting with secret advices. From Philadelphia he had come, as fast as horses could carry him, and these were the words he brought—‘The Stamps have been removed from the *Minerva* to a brig, name unknown, but she may be in New York any hour.’ This afternoon, Katrina, the brig came into harbor. Very merchantlike and innocent she looked, but the Boys boarded her, and found the Stamps! Found the Stamps! Katrina. Found the Stamps, Katrina! Hurrah! Hurrah!”

“Well then, Jan? What did they do with them?”

“Took them on shore, and burned them! They made a good fire—yes indeed!”

“Was it right, Jan, to burn the King’s property?”

“The King has no business with such a kind of property. It is not his, no! The Stamps are but robber tools to get at our property. Right? To be sure they did right! Right in the sight of God, right in the devil’s teeth!”

The very next day a prominent New York merchant called Lewis Pintard was discovered to have sent to Philadelphia a bond and a Mediterranean pass on stamped paper. The person from whom the Stamps had been procured was quickly found. A visit from an angry deputation of Liberty Boys followed, and the man in terror gave up all he possessed. He had to stand and watch them burn, but he was thankful to save all his other possessions by their sacrifice; while Pintard, in order to escape the vengeance of the people, publicly declared on oath that he did not know the documents were stamped.

Such events as these distinguished day from day, and made

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what little excitement there was to lighten the great gloom that pervaded the city. Dire poverty was on every hand, trade was almost dead, ships had to steal in, and out, by night, or they were stopped by men-of-war; paper money had been suppressed, as well as the courts of admiralty, appeals, internal taxes, etc., and the people generally were so poor, cross, and desperate, that the naval commander, terrified by the prospect of general riots, opened the road to the ocean once more. Yet the feeling against the Stamp Act was stronger than ever, and the vow with which America rang out 1765 and rang in 1766 was—"If England does not repeal the Stamp Act, we will repeal it ourselves."

And the sting of all these troubles was the irritating, depressing sense of unalterable suspense in which they were bound. Nothing was sure. News might be two months old when it reached New York. They were fighting their hard battle in the dark. They could not see a single move of their enemy, and sometimes conflicting reports reached them. The hearts of the bravest must often have failed them, but, if so, they showed no signs of weakness, and made no complaint, as individuals, of their suffering and self-denial.

They hardly could, while their women stood so cheerfully and busily at their side. For it was the women's part, by incessant labor, to keep all fed and clothed. The wheel, the loom, and the needles were never out of their hands. Little societies of mutual help sprang up in every locality, and Virginia Van Vroom was the originator and supporter of many. Before dawn she was spinning, and the principal hours of the day were passed in making the worn-out clothing of adults into small garments for the children. She soon became the Domine's right hand among the sick and destitute, and the prime mover in the charitable fairs and sales. She had no time for any thoughts but such as were allied

with patriotism and charity. And such noble thoughts and duties are creative; they brought her back the dew and the beauty of her youth.

The few royalists in New York made a half-hearted effort to keep up the usual feasting and entertainments of the winter; but they were quickly made aware of the popular disapproval. Feasting, dancing, gambling, and play-acting seemed indeed a mockery, in a city where want, and cold, and fearful looking-forward was the portion of the vast majority of the citizens. So to every household the days were long weary days, full of hard work and anxiety; and the nights were long nights, long, and dark, and cruelly cold.

One morning at the end of February, Jansen went into his garden, and lo! there was a flock of robins on a bare apple tree, picking the seeds from the withered fruit left from autumn's gathering. He cried out joyfully, and blessed the birds, talking and twittering so gayly over their frozen breakfast. Then he went to Katrina for a handful of bread crumbs, and his face shone, and his eyes were full of happy tears as he cried out, "Thank God, Katrina! The robins are here! The spring is not far behind them! Thank God, Katrina!"

This little incident made him very cheerful, and he walked down to the wharf, where an English ship was expected that day. She was just casting anchor, and Jansen waited among the crowd for the news. As he did so, a sailor with a letter in his hand approached, and Jan noticed that he scanned the faces of those he passed, as if looking for some one. Attracted perhaps by Jansen's curiosity, the sailor came to him, and asked to be shown the way to Captain Van Vroom's shop.

"I am Captain Van Vroom," was the answer.

"Then, Captain, this letter is for you. As we came out

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of Falmouth, we passed a man-of-war lying off the land, and an officer on board asked my Captain to deliver this letter for him when we reached New York. So I have a few hours off to find you. Captain, give me a shilling for a fresh meal. I have been long on salt water and salt rations. I want a fresh meal. Give me a shilling, Captain."

Jansen smiled, put a couple of shillings into the outstretched hand, and told the man to go to Burns' Coffee House for it. Then he went at once to 14 Wall Street; for he was sure the writing was the writing of Batavius, and he wished to know what that man had to say for himself, before he troubled Katrina this way, or that way, about him.

The big, sprawling red seal bore the name of the ship, but its unnecessary size and weight was the sign manual of Batavius. It was an exaggeration of a distinction, quite explanatory of a man who exaggerated everything relating to himself; and Jansen thought as he broke it—without any regard for the aggressive character of the guarding R. N.—that he would have known the letter was from Batavius by the seal, even if he had not seen the writing. The paper also was official, and the script itself had a largeness and breadth that brought a queer smile to Jansen's face. He straightened out the large square sheets, which had occupied Batavius many hours while crossing the Atlantic, and read as follows:

MY CAPTAIN:

No doubt you have been thinking many bad things of me, and so it will be better if I clear myself, and my way. For I must confess, that I do not feel comfortable when people think wrong of me, not knowing, as they ought to do, my innocent motives. It was doubtless said I ran away from your daughter. Generally speaking, that is true. For I saw plainly that Virginia hated me, and that her hatred—being exceedingly wicked and unjust—was making her insane—or worse. She had received

from *Someone*—not the good God—a power I could not submit to. She made me, against my will, do things I did not wish to do. Now what the deuce was I to think? For instance, she ordered me to throw on that log that burned up the wedding gown and veil. Though she never spoke, I know she ordered me to do it. It was then I asked myself, what must be the end of all this? What does it mean? And I knew it was insanity, or, as I said before, worse. I wish to make this statement as easy as may be for you, but when things came to the devil, and fire, and burning, I thought it time to run away. Yes, indeed! So I said to myself—"Batavius, you must flee from the devil, that is the strict command of the Holy Scriptures," and I answered myself—"Het Zij Zoo!" [So be it]. Then I went away to consider how to go, and where to go, and while I was yet in doubt, Captain Lawson came to me with an urgent request from the English government—a special commission with honors and money, more than I ever expected. So out of this great difficulty I came victorious—as I generally do. I wish you to tell Virginia this, that she may see how wicked in God's sight her hatred of me was. Much blame I lay on Lady Rose Harley, who scoffed at me and my just complaints, and said—"Virginia was not wicked, but living nearer to God, and the Angels, than I would ever get." That I liked not either. No man likes a wife of that kind. He wishes to be first, of course. Near to God we are always. Angels are bad, as well as good; and a lover does not want an Angel of any kind nearer to his bride than he is. Make Virginia understand that she can not reconcile herself to me. I am satisfied with the step I have taken. But I shall not stand in her way; only, it is not Batavius De Vries who is going to run after her.

So then, I want no favors from your daughter, but I want my rights. It is not my way to give up my rights for any one, and you know that for many years I have been giving her gems, pearls, fine goods, shawls, rugs, and other rich things; that is, they were given her provisionally—she was to be my wife—then they would have come back to me. As I can not possibly or religiously marry her, I request all these gifts, of whatever kind, be sent to the care of Peter Dieterich, with inventory of the same. That will be only honest. It is what I should do. Also, if you will meet Peter Dieterich, and with him settle our business, it will be best for both of us. There must be a change, for I

take leave to say, that you have injured the business very much, by going against the government. I never allow prejudice, or politics, to come into my business. In that way lies bankruptcy.

This is all, my Captain. I shall not forget that you were father and mother to me, when I was a friendless little lad; and afterwards, the best of Teachers and Captains. No, I am not unkind. I have a grateful heart. But Justice, Truth, and Common Sense I value above all other directions—making, of course, an exception of the Holy Scriptures. And I have told you the truth, for I have always noticed that people who do not tell the truth are generally badly off, and not much respected. Now, if you join me in Justice, and Common Sense, you will say “Batavius De Vries, R. N., is quite right, and without blame in the matter.

Yours with Great Respect,

BATAVIUS DE VRIES, R. N.

P. S.—I forgot to name the bit of land you gave me to build the house for Virginia on. As I was at great expense in draining and fencing, etc., I do not expect you to take it back, or charge me with it. On the contrary, I think it might be given me, as a kind of “Damages” for Virginia’s Breach of Promise.

B. D. V., R. N.

For a minute or two Jansen was between laughing and swearing, but his anger got the mastery, and for half an hour he sat brooding over schemes of revenge. Then he put the letter in his pocket, but immediately removed it, for he felt even his hands to be insulted by its contact. “My hands I can wash,” he reflected, “easier than Katrina can put a new pocket in my coat.” And as he walked home, he wondered at a hate so deep and scornful that his eyes, and his fingers, and his whole body was conscious of it. “But when Katrina has read the wicked words, I will give them to the fire;” and this resolution made the burden of the sheet of paper less hard to bear.

Word by word he read it to Katrina, and her face flushed angrily, but she made no interruptions. But, when the flimsy, insulting messenger had had its say, and Jansen was

about to burn it, she interfered. "Burn it not," she said. "See now, it is thy authority for getting him out of the business. Give it to Harry Rutgers. Let him settle with Peter Dieterich. Have thou nothing to do with the matter."

"No, I will publish the letter in *The Gazette*. If I do not, it will get out bit by bit, and be made worse than it is. It is a wicked letter, and will condemn him in the sight of all good men. It will, Katrina."

"And the good women? What about them? And how many dost thou know, who will utterly refuse his wicked assertions? Jansen, thou must give the letter to Harry. He will get for thee every halfpenny that is thine, and not one halfpenny more. And safely we may leave Virginia's good name in his care. Then throw the whole business behind thy back—speak not of it—think not of it. For my part, Jan, I am too busy thanking God that our dear one escaped the man, to care what words he says—bad or good. He is out of our life. Let him go."

Jansen did not at once accept Katrina's advice. He wanted satisfactions that the more prudent Katrina saw would bring with them much that would be hard to bear—and still harder to explain. The still night, however, brought with it calmness and reflection, and during sleep all the rubbish of personal irritations was cleared away. When daylight came, Jansen saw that his wife's advice was self-respecting and good; and he went to Harry Rutgers, and left the settlement of all to his integrity and judgment.

All with one exception—the land he had given as a site for the house Batavius was to build for Virginia, he would in no case give up. "Harry," he said, "you think it proper for Virginia to return the fellow his jewelry, since the marriage was not accomplished; well then, by the same rule, Batavius must properly return my land."

"Has he any deed of gift from you?"

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"No. The land is still mine; with the house he can do what he likes."

"He might buy the strip on which the house stands."

"That would please me. All the land round him I should control, and such buildings as I chose, I could make. No garden there would be. Yes, that would do, Harry. Sell him the strip on which his house stands."

Harry laughed. "I have no doubt," he answered, "that Dieterich has full instruction about the land, in case you refuse it as 'Damages' for Virginia's breach of promise. Now, Captain, the whole affair is not worth one bad word. In a month all will be settled."

It hardly took a month, for Batavius had a perfect business instinct; everything was in order, every book up to date, no transactions concerning which any loophole had been left for doubt, or debate—and one morning towards the end of March, Jansen walked into 14 Wall Street as sole master on the premises. He had had a new sign painted, and Katrina walked down town to see it. The simple inscription, "JANSEN VAN VROOM," pleased her very much. She thought she had never seen her husband's name look better.

"But I wish, Katrina, I could have put Arent's name with mine."

Katrina's face grew sad, and with a sigh she answered, "Thou could not. He will marry that English girl, and for trade of all kinds she has only scorn. I could see that."

"And if he did not marry her, then so wretched he would be, that only on a ship would he be able to bear his life. So then our Arent is not ours."

"What we can not change we must bear. And there is good news from London—Anna Bradley told me so."

Not long after Jansen received his letter from Batavius, Virginia had one from Rose. It was full of affection, but the drop of disappointment was in it. She had not seen

Joris. She had sent for him the morning after she landed, and was broken-hearted when told that Squire Settle and Lieutenant Artaveldt had left at daylight for Settlebourne. Some epidemic had broken out in the village, and the simple peasants were sure it was because the Squire was not there. In the afternoon, she said, she had gone with her aunt to Squire Settle's house in Mayfair, and had a conversation with the majordomo. From him they learned the Squire would certainly be back in London to see the repeal of the Stamp Act during March.

Virginia told her Mother "it was a very sweet letter," and she tried hard to believe every word of it. But some seed of distrust sprang from reading it. She said to herself—Rose arrived in London at daylight, why did she not send for Joris in the afternoon of that day? She promised not to lose a moment—she lost nearly a day—and missed Joris by about three hours. Arent was with her, of course, and Virginia was far away. With a slight shrug of her shoulders, and a tightening of her lips, she put the letter away out of her sight.

"But Joris will come to me," she mused. "In spite of delays, in spite of everything ill-fortune can do, Joris will come. So I will be happy and wait for the hour that is set. God knows, impatience has brought me sorrow enough. I can wait! I can wait!" and she made each affirmation with a more positive cheerfulness and assurance.

About this time the robins began to come oftener, and to dispute the branches on which they would build, and there were other manifest signs that winter was over. And people have to go through a hard, cold, pinching winter, to know what spring means—to feel the heart throb at the first green thing—and the feet fly to kiss the first snowdrop—and the voice joyfully echo the thrush's sweet, clear tirra-la-la-lal!

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But the crowning joy of this spring was the news full of hope that every ship began to bring from England. The colonists heard that the King was distracted—that, even around the throne, the legality of the Stamp Act was ridiculed and disputed—if he left his palace he was followed by angry crowds shouting “Repeal The Stamp Act!” London seemed to be rising *en masse*—to carry through the Act they would need the army to keep order—England generally was as angry at the illegal tax as New York could be—Parliament was sitting all day, and all night, considering what to do with it—and the great Pitt, even at death’s door, with marvelous eloquence demanding “the total abolition of a tax which threatened the validity of the Constitution, and the liberty of every citizen.”

New Yorkers heard these and similar reports, and the very streets seemed conscious of the return of prosperity. Men were looking after their long-closed stores, overhauling their ships, repainting their wagons and drays, and buying horses and mules to draw them—and in many other ways getting ready for the rush of business that would follow the removal of that bit of threepenny paper. The women gladly caught the same spirit. They were weary to death of spinning and weaving, knitting and sewing and dyeing, and had, besides, that usual womanly spring fever that is only cured by a spring cleaning.

Katrina had it acutely. She was constantly lamenting the delay, and wondering “what was keeping those London men from doing at once what they must have known for a year they would be made to do.” Sometimes her impatience took Arent for its text—“always he was boasting about the swiftness of the *Manhattan*. Why then did he not come with the truth? Idling about London, she supposed, with that Rose Harley, though he must know that his mother always lifted the winter carpets in May—but there! Arent

was always careless about the house, though he went into a flaming passion, if an inch of rope was out of place on his ship."

One afternoon Virginia found Madame with all her silver before her—pots and urns, cups and vases, knives and forks and spoons, and candlesticks. She was polishing the much-neglected plate, and seeming to enjoy the work.

"Shall I help you, moeder?" asked Virginia.

"Dear one, I would like some help. This morning I was dreaming of Arent. He stood at the bow of the *Manhattan*, and his face was smiling, and his brown hair blowing in the wind, and his ship dancing over the waves like a sea bird. He is coming, Virginia! He is bringing good news! We can begin the spring cleaning as soon as we like. For two months I have been *almost sure*. That is a very tormenting feeling, Virginia; to-day you believe, and you will do something—to-morrow, you do not believe, and you have no heart to do anything. But now! I am sure! so then I can work."

"Sure of the Stamp Act being repealed? Is that what you mean, moeder?"

Katrina nodded positively—then said, "Yes, that is what I mean. And Arent will bring the news."

Katrina was not wrong. On the 18th of May, A. D. 1766, when New York had put on her most beautiful spring weather, Jansen went down to the Van Vroom wharf, and stood there looking eastward with longing eyes. Suddenly he shifted his position, and shielded his eyes from the sun.

"My God!" he cried, with deep emotion, "I believe that is the *Manhattan*! I know her! I know her! courtesying like a duchess she comes! Flying like a swallow—up and down—up and down! Arent must be at the wheel—God bless the boy! He always brings his ship in racing as if a

victory she had won. And so she has—a great victory over three thousand miles of stormy water—safe in the waft of His winds! Thanks be!”

His heart was full of mingled feelings—gratitude, pride, hope, anxiety, love and longing. He could not let the dear ship out of sight, but he sent messengers far and near with the news; so that when the *Manhattan* came to anchor, it was amid the wildest cheers of welcome. “*The Stamp Act Repealed!*” shouted the crowd on the ship, and the crowd on the wharf took up the joyful cry, and carried it through every street in the city. Rejoicing, exultant crowds filled the air with jubilant shouts of victory, and for an hour or two New York was mad with a delirious sense of deliverance and triumph.

And it was impossible for the Deputies whom Arent had carried to London to get clear of the crowds. They wanted to know how the Commons received “The Memorial of the Colonial Congress.” They wanted to hear about the final moves in the great battle. Above all things, they wished to be positively assured of the absolute repeal of the hateful Act. Hardly any words seemed strong enough to make them satisfied, until McLeod said in his familiar way—

“Sure as death! the Stamp Act is repealed, annulled, pitched into oblivion, torn to rags, burned up in popular hatred. I saw the miserable end o’ the dirty piece o’ paper. And I saw George R. come down to the Parliament House to sign the Repeal Act, which was its death warrant. It nearly killed George R. to sign that Repeal Bill. And he is not going to forget that you unruly New Yorkers made him do it. I’m off to South Carolina to-morrow, and I’ll be kind o’ out o’ His Majesty’s sacred way; but you imprudent New Yorkers have sat yoursel’s down just where he can conveniently lay his hand upon you, and on everything you have. You be to watch him. George R. will

require you to watch him. There is no need to be so anxious to say 'Thank ye, great George, our King!' for he is not going to forgive any one of us for making him do right. Not he! Not to save our souls! And you'll do well to mind this, friends—it willna be a threepenny tax next time—it will be a tax that will go to the bottom of our pockets, and the bottom of our patience."

But Arent took no part in these explanations and assurances. As soon as he had waited upon the Governor with his great news, he went home. Katrina and Virginia were both eagerly watching for him. The mother thought only of her boy, and of his triumph in being the first bringer of good tidings. Virginia, while dearly loving her brother, and heartily joining in the general rejoicing, had her own special hope added. She was sure Arent would bring her a letter about Joris; he might even bring Joris with him. He did not bring Joris, but Virginia put her disappointment away in smiles; and the early greetings, and questions, and conversation were so general and mixed, that she did not like to push her private anxiety into them.

About the Stamp Act, Arent declined to talk. He said he "was weary of it, and that his father would want to go over the whole ground as soon as he came home." Indeed, Lady Rose, and London life and city, seemed to fill his heart and his memory, and to be the sum of his anticipations. Yet, when Virginia asked him what he thought of London society, he said, "It was a gambling, dancing, riotous, rakehelly life—no time for thought or work—it was just living in a hurricane." And he ate his green peas and chicken to descriptions of routs, and balls, and entertainments that made Madame and Virginia blush and wonder.

"Such a life!" cried Madame. "How could you bear it, Arent? The fresh winds, and the great sea, did they not call you away from it?"

"Moeder, sometimes they did. But Rose would say, 'I must go here or there to-day,' and I did not like to let her go without me. She is so lovely—so run after. I must keep care of her, until she is surely mine."

"And then you may keep double care of her, and not find it enough."

"Moeder!"

"Let the words die—if thou like them not."

When his meal was finished he went into the garden, and as he walked amid the sweets of spring and lilac-tide, he seemed to be lost in a happy reverie. Virginia watched him with a hot and heavy heart; he had brought her no letter from Rose—he had made no allusion to her frustrated marriage—and the flight of Batavius—and he had never named Joris.

And she had that delicacy of feeling which forbade her to intrude her own hopes or sorrows, if others did not lead the way. No one, however, seemed to remember either her or her lover. Madame's heart was full of Arent and his affairs. Virginia she had always with her. After the meal she left the room with Arent's name on her lips, and Virginia went to the window and watched her brother slowly pacing the lilac-scented walk, and softly smiling to his reverie. He was so much changed—but how? She could not answer that question. Only it was evident that he had become a man, and that the boy had gone forever.

Her mother entered while she was pondering this change, and she said a little crossly, "Why now art thou looking sad? What is the matter with thee? Here is the Tax repealed, and thy brother first with the news of it; surely there is nothing to grieve thee to-day!"

"Moeder, I am glad for every one to-day. I was only thinking that Arent never once spoke of Joris. I wonder that Rose sent me no letter. I wonder if she has told Joris

what she promised me to tell him. If so, why did she send no word by Arent?"

"Thou art right. Why? Why? I will tell thee why. Rose thinks of nothing but Arent. Arent thinks of nothing but Rose. Go and ask thy brother in so many straight words—why?"

So Virginia went into the summer-house, now green and sweet with honeysuckle, and called Arent to her. He came at once, sat by her side, took her hand, and said, "My dear sister!"

"Well, then," she asked, "have you no letter? No word of any kind for me?"

"I have no letter, for when I went to bid Rose 'good-bye' the men were waiting at the anchor, and I had not a moment to spare—and Rose had not finished her letter to you."

"I understand. Did she send me no message? Had she seen Joris Artaveldt?"

"Yes, indeed! And very impertinent he was to her."

"Are you not saying too much? When did Rose see Joris?"

"Joris, and his ridiculous old cousin, got back to London the day before Repeal. Rose, the dear one, had been watching day and night for him."

"Arent! Day and night——"

"Well, my meaning you know. Her man had been kept running between the duke's palace and Squire Settle's house in Mayfair. When Joris returned he had Rose's command to attend her at once—and, of course—he did so; though he made unpleasant remarks about being 'very weary with the long, hard drive from Yorkshire.'"

"I dare say he was very tired."

"He need not have told Rose that. Fancy any one being tired when they were asked to see Lady Rose Harley! She

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looked angelic, I am sure; and she received him in one of their most splendid parlors; but Joris—after all their friendship, too—was quite cold and indifferent. Poor Rose was dashed at once by his behavior, and could scarcely begin her story. It was a cruel thing for the darling to have to explain. I don't see how you could ask her to do it, Virginia. But she said she had promised you, and must keep her word."

"Arent, surely you did not try to prevent her?"

"What was the good of bringing up all that old foolishness?"

"The good? Well, the happiness of two lives."

"In spite of my advice, the little angel told the fellow everything. He never helped her by a single word of pity, or excuse—just let her go on blaming herself, and clearing you—till she broke down, and began to cry with mortification."

"Did he not say one comforting word?"

"Not one. On the contrary, he told her she had sacrificed your happiness for a crazy King, and even insinuated that she hoped for a reward from the Privy Purse—or some other particular sign of the royal favor. Then Lady Rose became very angry, and told him his abominable pride and temper had nearly killed you, and so on, and in the midst of her just passion, Joris rose and bowed himself out of the room."

"I am sorry Rose lost her temper. It was unkind to me, for now I know nothing. She promised to send me word whether he would return to New York—whether he yet loved me—or whether I had better resign him forever."

"I don't see how you could marry a man with such a temper. Think of him attacking Lady Rose, as if she was a person in his own rank of life! Give the impertinent fellow up."

"This impertinent Joris! Do you think he will ever come to New York again?"

"He actually asked me for a passage for his cousin and himself. His cousin I can not bear. Rose, too, considers him tiresome and vulgar, and he is constantly talking, talking. I could not put up with Squire Settle. I must, as you know, be lord and master in my own ship; and Squire Settle would talk the King down. He did talk the House of Commons down."

"They liked it, and very well he talked."

"Oh, to the upper classes, it was laughing matter."

"So you refused Joris a passage?"

"I told him I had no room. I made it as polite as I could. If I had not been so near sailing, far less politeness would have been sufficient."

"On the next ship he may come?"

"On the ship that brings the Repeal Act to the Governor, he will come. He said his cousin preferred it, but had been willing to humor his hurry. A prouder bit of human flesh than Joris Artaveldt does not exist."

"Spirit, you mean, Arent?"

"Flesh, too. The way he flings up his head, his quick, short speech, the toss of his velvet cloak, the tilt of his sword, the cock of his beaver, everything he does and says, shows him up as proud as the devil. The fact is, Virginia, he has been ruined by the way Londoners have treated him—only because he was an American rebel, and young, and rather handsome."

"Others have been spoiled in London, besides Joris. I should not think Rose would like to marry you, if you change much more. You are cruelly selfish, and proud also, Arent."

"I have always had a proud nature."

"Yes, but you were proud of great things—of outriding a big storm—of a quick voyage—of saving life—or helping

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a ship—or any noble deed—of freedom, humanity, knowledge.”

“Well, then, I am proud yet of such things.”

“Perhaps. But also now, you are proud of titles, of fine dress, of going to Court, operas, theaters, balls, and such places; and of all the follies which you yourself called ‘a gambling, dancing, rakehelly living in a hurricane.’”

“Come, come, sister, mind your own affairs. Arent knows his chart, he is not going out of his right course. Better it will be for you to go into the house, and help our moeder—meat and drink must be at hand, for a crowd fader may bring home with him.”

On the contrary, the Captain brought no one with him but McLeod, and both men were completely worn out. Madame gave them a hot drink, and sent them upstairs to sleep for an hour or two; and they were thankful for the rest, and did not appear again until the sun was set, the candles lit, and the *avondmaal* just ready. Arent had taken the same privilege, and Madame felt grieved at the small desertion.

“I thought he would like to stay with us, and talk of what Rose and he were going to do.”

“He will do just what Rose wishes. Moeder, can you not see that all about his own home wearies him? He never noticed the new white curtains, nor the addition to the stable, nor even the fresh paint on the boat house. He told me he would be at sea again in two or three days. He does not like Joris Artaveldt.”

“Always thou art thinking some one does not like Joris Artaveldt. That is no sin, I think. One can not like everybody. I like not Rose Harley. Very selfish and foolish is she.”

“Dear moeder, scold me not. Many little heartaches I have to bear—fears and doubts, and disappointments. I

thought Joris would have come with Arent, and Arent refused him a passage, because he could not bear Squire Settle."

"Well, then, Arent's ship is his house, and he is very masterful in it, I know that! Yet for thee, his sister, he ought to have made some sacrifice of his own way. That would have been right."

It was evident Arent had not brought much private comfort to his home. He was so jealous of Rose, that he resented conversation concerning her. It seemed a kind of presumption for even his mother and sister to use her name in common speech, or to speculate about her sayings and doings. He himself hardly named her, but he thought of her continually. Already the lover had begun "to leave father and mother" and cleave to the woman who was to be his wife; and the father and mother, perforce, to teach themselves to take daily life independent of his presence and affection.

So the supper table was happy enough without Arent, and indeed like to be the happier for his absence; since to his mother and sister Arent had expressed the utmost distaste and weariness of the Stamp Act. "And no wonder!" said Katrina apologetically; "he has heard nothing else for four months, shut up in his ship with it, and in London forced to listen to it morning, noon, and night. Sometimes we have been weary of it, Virginia. Yet we must hear about the repeal of the tiresome thing, so I am glad McLeod came home with your fader. After to-night we put it out of hearing—we name it no more. But this night, yes, we will talk of it." So they were hardly seated round the table, before Madame asked, "When did the *Manhattan* reach London, McLeod?"

"Two days after Christmas, Madame; but signs o' Christmas merriment were few, and far between. The King

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was going crazy wi' anger at our impertinent disobedience to him, which he complained 'Parliament was allowing to go unpunished.' He thought himself insulted by the extremely humiliating conduct of you New Yorkers, and the Boston men no better—not a whit to choose between them—and he considered the surrender o' the Stamps to the citizens of New York was such a serious matter that he called Parliament together to consult anent its punishment."

"Not far wrong was he—a very serious matter it was. He would have thought it more so, if in poor Colden's place he had been. But what did Parliament do?"

"Quarreled and fought o'er that bit of provoking paper, as if the nation depended on it. And some both thought, and said, it did. Rockingham declared it made the English government an absolute monarchy, that it mocked the grand old Constitution, and so on. Pitt abused Newcastle, insulted Lord Bute, and defied Parliament, telling them they had taxed America without a shadow of right to do so, and he *rejoiced because the Americans had refused to be robbed by Act of Parliament*. Then Sir Fletcher Norton told Pitt he sounded the trumpet of rebellion; and Pitt answered there were good reasons for rebellion, that for the same reason, Englishmen had rebelled twice before; and that they would continue to rebel, whenever taxed without their own permission—and so on. Barnard wanted a royal fleet to go instantly and destroy New York. He thought you rebellious, impudent New Yorkers should be made an awful example of the fate awaiting those who defied our Gracious King George the Third. Then Pitt rose in a fury—'he was ashamed that any minister, or man, could be found ready to dip the royal ermine in the blood of our brothers; for,' he said passionately, 'the Americans are Englishmen, and part of the English nation; we have no right to make distinctions, or to consider the soil or the cradle where a man was

nursed!' I tell you, friends, it was well worth the journey to England to hear William Pitt speak."

"I wish then that I had gone with you," said the Captain regretfully. "I might have gone. I wish I had."

"Far better it was for thee to be at home, Jan. Thou would have wanted to have thy say, even in the Parliament house."

"Well, then, why not? The right and the wrong of everything, I knew; they did not."

"Pitt knew. He took your place for you, good friend. It was on the 14th of January, I first saw and heard him," continued McLeod. "Nugent was insisting that the honor and dignity of the King and nation demanded the compulsory execution of the Stamp Act. Then Pitt rose—you know his speech—it was reported by Moffat of Rhode Island."

"And made America delirious with delight," cried Virginia. "I read it twenty times over."

"Good girl! After Pitt sat down, Mr. Conway rose, and said he agreed with Mr. Pitt in every particular. Then Grenville jumped to his feet, and said the factious rebellious spirit in the House of Commons made the colonies rebel; and so the quarreling went on, until the House clamored for Pitt, and would hear no one else. Then Pitt rose again, and floods of light poured from his eyes, and his voice, thrilled wi' passion, made every heart tingle. '*I rejoice that America has resisted*,' he cried, and the House rose cheering, and he repeated the assertion. But though he spoke wi' the tongue of men and angels, he could not settle the weary business; for at four o'clock in the morning,—after a whole night's discussion,—only Pitt and two others were for repealing the Act; three hundred were for letting the Treasury do what it pleased with the Americans. All was to go over again."

"God in Heaven!" cried the Captain, "that made us taxable at the will of the English House of Commons."

"Yes, just so; and Mr. Secretary Conway rose immediately, and said, '*Then American representatives must be admitted at once to this House.*' He was supported by the great judge, Lord Camden, who said, 'Representation and taxation are joined by an eternal law of Nature. Whatever is a man's own, is absolutely his own; no one can take it from him. Whoever does, commits a robbery. No people can be justly taxed but by themselves, or their representatives. This doctrine lies at the root of political liberty.'"

"Camden was right, and we knew it, and will stand for it with our lives!" almost shouted Jansen.

"Don't break my china, Jan," cried Madame, for he had struck the table a ringing blow, as he uttered his defiance. "Now, then, McLeod," she continued, "what brought about such a great change of feeling in Parliament?"

"The people of England and Scotland, my dear Madame—the people! the majesty of the manufacturers! and the almighty trading and working classes! A general insurrection was at hand. A nod from the Ministers would have let loose all the hands in Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol, Birmingham, Nottingham, Leeds, Leicester, and such populous towns, then full of idle, starving mechanics and tradesmen. London was hardly kept quiet by the near presence of the army; the lobby of the House—the Courts of Requests—and all the avenues, were beset with merchants, whose business was with America. We owed them many millions, and we would neither pay old bills, nor give fresh orders, till the Stamp Act was repealed. Artisans all over England were out of work, and England was facing a commercial ruin to which ours would be but a bagatelle. I tell you, Madame, it was a time to live, and to feel how justice can quicken the heart, and stir the blood of a man. I never

had much respect for talking before, but talk won this battle. Glory be to William Pitt, and Mr. Secretary Conway! If they had been soldiers, instead of orators, and had chosen to lead the angry men crowding London streets, they might have made the grand old city the funeral pyre of the unjust mischievous Act—but thanks be! the talking broke no bones, and burnt no cities.”

“Were you present at the Repeal?” asked Virginia.

“All the deputies were there. I remember only two speeches—one by Conway, who astounded the House by asserting—‘France and Spain were going to take the part of the Americans, and declare war against England.’ That was an unexpected argument, but it went clear down into every consciousness. He did not require to explain it. And very soon the lobbies were crowded with men silent with anxiety, and trembling for the issue of the vote. About midnight, a large, fair man, attended by a slim, dark youth, took the floor, and it is easy enough to remember the few words he said. His name was Settle of Settlebourne.”

“Tell us,” said Virginia breathlessly.

“‘Gentlemen and Commoners of England!’ he cried in a voice that penetrated the House. ‘I’ve had my say in this place before, and I’ve only a word or two this night for you, but I ask you to remember—that the invasion of one natural right will be made the precedent and justification for another—and another. Where will that business stop? And remember, likewise, that if the arbitrary power now trying itself on the Americans gets its own way, you will have it in England next—for what the King may do on one side of the Atlantic, he will not fail to do on the other. So, if you do not intend to repeal the Stamp Act, I advise you to go to your homes as soon as ever you can, get your tenantry together, and drill them in your meadows, as Hampden and Cromwell did. The ship money these men would not pay

was twenty shillings. The Stamp Act is only threepence. Never mind that! The wrong was the same; and, if you want the job, you can make the outcome the same, I tell you.' He sat down amid tremendous shouting, and soon after the count was taken, and the repeal of the Stamp Act passed, by two hundred and fifty to one hundred and twenty-two. The doors were flung wide open, the count declared, and in a few minutes tens of thousands were shouting, '*Repealed! Repealed!*' through every street in the waiting, sleepless city. About Conway the people clung as captives about a redeemer, and when Pitt appeared, an immense crowd threw up their hats, and followed his chair with shouts of *Io Pitts! Io Pitts!* They were like madmen, but it was a godlike madness, Captain, a godlike madness, ladies, and Hector McLeod shouted himself hoarse with them! Such a night was worth ten years of life that is just ordinary. I'll be a better man for it, as long as I live. Just so!"

"Yes, yes!" muttered the Captain sadly, "I wish I had been with you, McLeod. I do, indeed!"

"Jan, it was better for thee to be at home. In that crowd no one missed thee—but here we could not have done without thee."

Virginia sighed with happiness. The large, fair man—with the dark youth at his side—filled her imagination. Joris had been in the heart of that tremendous scene, and she surrounded him with all the glory of it, and carrying the thrill of its triumph with her into the Land of Sleep, molded the vision there to her desire.

In the morning New York was astir and busy at the dawn of day. No one could be busy enough. Arent had gone to his ship while it was yet dark, and when he came home for breakfast, explained that he wished to be ready to leave for Norfolk in two days. "I have a large consignment of furs,"

he said, "but that is not sufficient. I am going to Norfolk for tobacco. I must not let others get there before me."

Madame made no remark. Her hand trembled violently as she poured out his coffee, but neither complaint nor entreaty fell from her lips. Virginia, however, plainly expressed her surprise, and disappointment, but found it fruitless. "Business is business, Virginia, and now, more so than ever;" and when she persisted in her expostulations, he grew petulant, or silent, drank his coffee hastily, and went back to business.

"There was no use in teasing him, Virginia. Very cross and displeased he feels."

"Moeder, I wish that he should feel displeased. Two days with us, and then back he goes to London."

"Well, then, his heart is in London. That we can not change."

So on the morning of the third day, Arent was ready to sail. Madame did not ask to what port he was bound, and Arent offered no information. In the bright noon sunshine, he went, turning at the gate with his old boyish smile and ringing voice, to say another "good-bye." Then they watched him hurrying down the road, as if he heard Rose calling him. Virginia's eyes were full of tears. Madame had an air of pathetic restraint. She had spoken little, and her manner was cold and weary; but Arent did not seem to be aware of it. Till he was quite away she preserved this attitude, then broke miserably down, and wept with that hopeless abandon that only age and childhood can feel. She would take no excuses, and no comforting. "My boy has left me—given me up—for a strange girl!" she cried—"I shall see him no more! *O weel! O weel!*—Why does God give, and then take away?"

"Dear moeder, it is Rose, not God. And if Arent stayed here, very miserable he would make you, and all of us."

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"I know! I know! When the heart has left the old home, to come back to it is foolish."

"Even for two days, moeder?"

"Yes, two days are then too much. Well, I must look to the house, everything is topsy-turvy again."

A little later Virginia called—"Moeder, do you not hear the drums, and the shouting? and listen! they are firing cannon from the fort!"

"Well, then, it will be the Repeal Bill at least. I wish we were done with that weary Stamp Act."

"Moeder dear, will you give me this day? Only this day. If Joris come not with this ship—I will never speak his name to thee again."

"Dost thou think he will come?"

"Yes—and I would dress myself nicely to meet him," said Virginia.

"That is but right."

"I have had so much sorrow."

"About him?—I know."

"Not his fault, moeder."

"Nor thine—if Rose Harley——"

"Let us not speak that name, moeder."

"Thou art right—an unlucky name to us."

"Give me this day. If Joris comes, I shall be happy, and thou wilt be happy with me. If he does not come—I shall have a few hours—to put him out of my heart forever."

"A few hours! Poor child! But go dress thyself. I understand that."

In a little while Virginia cried with great excitement—"Moeder, I see Justice Artaveldt's carriage! It is drawn by his four new black horses, and it is going to the city. Justice Artaveldt is in it. I think he is going to meet Squire Settle—and Joris."

"Then get thyself dressed. If the ship is in—it will not be half an hour before they are back again."

The ship was just outside, and the Squire and Joris were on deck, looking at the young metropolis—so white, and bright, among her tree-lined streets; bathed in sunshine, and vocal with the glad sounds of a rejoicing population. Gayly she came, courtesying to the crowd watching her; and the *Manhattan* was just going out, with all her sails set, and an air of business about her spick-and-span deck, and her young captain standing by the main mast. Suddenly a youth on the government ship stepped forward, lifted his hat, and called to Arent. Arent heard the voice, looked up, and saw Joris; lifted his hat, and stood for a moment or two bare-headed. During this act of courtesy the ships passed, and the men had bid each other "farewell" forever. Never in life did they meet again.

In the meantime, Virginia, wearing her prettiest white dress, came downstairs to meet her lover. She had no pearls or gems to wear on this day—they were all with Peter Dieterich, and oh, how glad she was they were with Peter! But there were pansies at her breast, and a pink rosebud in her exquisite hair; and they were all the adornments she needed; she had never before been half so lovely. Her first thought was to set the front door wide open. Then she went to the best parlor, and drew up the blinds, and lifted the windows, and let the warm scented air flood the room.

"If Joris comes!" she whispered, and then corrected herself, and said positively, "*When* Joris comes, we will go into the parlor, and explain everything." She ran to the garden then, and gathered a handful of lilies of the valley, and put them on the table, and had scarcely done so, when she heard the tramp of Justice Artaveldt's carriage horses. Joris was coming now—she could hardly breathe. She stood listening, as if her sensitive body were all ear. The

tramp came nearer. She smiled faintly. "It will stop at the gate in one minute"—she said this to her heart, and the next moment it had passed the gate. She could not believe it. She stepped hastily to the door. The carriage was open, and she saw plainly that only two men were in it. Neither of them was Joris. She turned cold as ice, sick as death. Joris had not come. Oh, what should she do? How could she bear it? For a few minutes life seemed impossible.

Then she went into the best parlor. Not yet could she meet her mother—and perhaps—perhaps—Joris might yet come. There was the Custom House—and other things. "I will wait one hour," she said; "after that, if he has not come—anything. I do not care what!" So she lifted her work bag, and tried to sew. It was impossible. She could not see—all her being was in her ears. "One hour, only one hour I will wait." These words she repeated constantly, without knowing it. She was miserably restless, but she compelled herself to sit still. The big clock in the hall ticked noisily, and oh, so quick the hour was going—going—and not a sound broke the stillness of the quiet, warm afternoon.

All at once, there was a sense of movement, a sound, and it came nearer. It was surely footsteps—they were quick, strong footsteps—not her father's. She stood up to listen. They came nearer—they were quicker and stronger—they could not be mistaken—they were the footsteps of Joris! She heard him open the gate, and come rapidly up the flagged path to the front door. Then she ran to meet him—and before a word could be uttered, he had clasped her to his breast and kissed her.

"I thought you had not come! I thought you were never coming again. I was just telling my heart to break as quickly as it could."

"My darling! I could not keep away. I came as soon after I knew the truth as it was possible to come. I should have been here half an hour ago, but I saw the Captain on the pier, and after leaving my cousin with father, I went to him."

"What did you say, Joris?"

"I said, 'Captain,' and he turned and looked at me a moment, then he put out his hand and said kindly, 'Thou, Joris? I am glad to see thee! I did thee wrong! I am sorry for it!'"

"Ah, my good father!"

"After that, all was plain and straight. We walked together as far as Peter Dieterich's house, and we forgave the past, and settled the future, as far as we could without thy help. Virginia, he has given thee to me!"

"I gave myself to thee long ago."

"So true, so sweet thou hast been! Keep me not waiting longer. Be my wife next week. Sit down and talk with me. Let me hear thy voice again. Oh, Virginia! Virginia! My love for thee sits in my heart, and runs with my blood, and I am only half-alive, and only half-Joris without thee!"

It was a long, long talk that followed, and Madame disturbed it not.

"If they want me, they will call me," she thought; and they did call her, and she carried in wine and cake, and welcomed Joris with a kiss. But she asked him nothing—this day was Virginia's. She would not tithe it in any way.

When it grew to sunset Joris had to leave, and as he rose he said, "My dearest! give me back my betrothal gift. Oh, how brutally I used the blessed little token! Yet give it back to me, I beg thee."

"The Strawberry Handkerchief?"

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"The Strawberry Handkerchief! Give it to me again, and never, never will I part with it."

She blushed red as a rose, and lifted her work bag, and took from it one of those pretty little boxes, made of two large well-fitting walnut shells; and very common presents even fifty years ago. It was lined with blue satin, and tied with narrow blue satin ribbon, and he watched her glowing face and lovely hands with delight as she unfastened it, and shook out of the tiny bed, the wonderful bit of cambric, almost fine as a spider web. With a kiss she laid it in his hands, and he looked pitifully at the cruel rent, and put it to his lips; for he saw that the darling girl had been darning it, with such infinite patience and labor as only love could teach her.

"Wonderful stitches!" he cried, "wonderful! wonderful! How long, my dear one, has it taken you to mend this finger length?"

"I began to mend it as soon as it was torn. It is very fine work. I could not do much at a time."

"Thou wonder of women! Such a miracle of faith and work can not go on. It is wasting a life far too precious to me."

"But, Joris, it must be mended. Very unhappy I shall be unless it is joined."

"I tore it, and I will join it."

"But how? I see not. What can thou do?"

Then he drew her close within his left arm, and took something from his vest pocket. "Come, beloved," he said, "we will join it with our wedding ring," and together, with a tender solemnity, they easily passed the Strawberry Handkerchief through it.

"It is a heavenly way, Joris!" said Virginia. "And we will never forget that it was mended with our wedding ring. Troubles must come, Joris, but all our life long we will

mend them with our wedding ring. And you will leave me no more, beloved?"

"I can never leave thee again, Virginia. As soon as we two are joined by this mystic circle, neither man, nor woman, can ever put us asunder."

For a few moments they stood speechlessly happy, with the rejoined Handkerchief between them. Then they were aware of the soft roll of drums, and of shouting voices coming nearer. Hand in hand they went to the open door, and saw that it was a small body of Liberty Boys with their favorite leader, Isaac Sears. They had met the Captain at Peter Dieterich's gate, and were delighting themselves by escorting him home.

"Hurrah for Jansen Van Vroom!" shouted Sears, and the "Hurrah!" rang joyously out.

"A good man!"

A soft roll of drums said "Yes."

"A pure patriot!"

Again the rolling drums agreed.

"A thorough New Yorker!"

A long, loud roll of approval.

Then Joris and Virginia stepped outside, and their love story being well known, shout after shout of congratulations followed.

"Long love, and long life to Joris Artaveldt and Virginia Van Vroom!" and to this order the drums beat rapturously, and the lovers leaned toward each other in visible beauty and delight.

"There will be no Stamps on your marriage papers, youngsters!" called Sears; and then with a parting salute they went forward. But not silently, oh, no! they were far too exultant to keep quiet that day. A lad with a wonderful voice began one of those patriotic songs which without making any pretense to be poetry always somehow "got

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there." And as they sang it with passionate fervor, the drums kept up a steady murmuring assent to all it declared—

Power of England, it was all in vain,
New York never would stand a chain;
Send more Stamps, we'll burn them again!
New York for my money!

Bet on New York, for she will be
The greatest city the world shall see,
Rich and busy, and brave and free,
New York for my money!

Thus to the roll of drums, the echo of song, and the kiss of lovers, this marvelously triumphant year of New York's story happily ends.

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